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Byron: The Man and the Poet, by Desmond MacCarthy, on page 844

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EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Notes of a Rapid Reader

High Wind in Jamaica. By Richard Hughes. Harpers.

BY this, or any other name, this book which on its first issue last year was called "Innocent Voyage," would read as well. It is a story that Kenneth Grahame might have written if the charming Victorian world his Olympians walked in had cracked a little and let some of its romance run out. There is plenty of fantasy in this story of a group of children that captured a pirate ship and hung the pirates (eventually and by proxy), but it is a psychological fantasy that is sardonic, adventurous, charming, and never sentimental. There are aspects of a masterpiece in "High Wind in Jamaica."

Bottom Dogs. By Edward Dahlberg. Simon & Schuster.

This story of the dregs and scum of America is the last twist of naturalism round the neck of interest. It is as dull and drab and dirty as its title suggests. It pleased D. H. Lawrence (who writes the Preface) because it proved to him that the Americans were suffering from broken hearts, broken in the hardships of pioneering and never repaired. It proves to this present writer that Mr. Dahlberg had unhappy experiences in his youth and was unfortunately advised to write about them. "Bottom Dogs" is an illegimate child of Art by Sociology and should be labeled "specimen" and put into a bibliography.

Schweik. The Good Soldier. By Jaroslav Hasek. Doubleday, Doran.

In Europe last summer the fame of this book had already crept from the Balkans through Austria and was beginning to be talked about in Paris and London. Schweik's distinction is precisely that he is so much the perfect soldier that everything he does and says has a slightly ironic suggestion until the whole institution of militarism begins to seem a little ridiculous. It is like the perfect traffic policeman—so absolutely typical that while lost in admiration you upset him with your fender. Schweik is so professional that all the other privates of literature who "scrounge," lie, boast, dodge, and funk seem amateurs. All those aspects of war which set the other literary soldiers on edge with surprised horror and disgust are as natural to him as rain from a cloud. The war for Schweik was just an extension of the life of the barracks to the wide world, which thereupon became normal. He is the nearest thing to Bardolph and Falstaff that this war produced.

The Green Pastures. By Marc Connelly. Farrar & Rinehart.

This is the play that brought religion back to New York. But of course what "The Green Pastures" more truly does is to revive through its naive simplicities the sense of poetry which lies in the memories of every great mythology. There are after all only a few great books in the world. Take one of them, and strain its essence through the imagination of an intensely sensuous race, set it to rolling spirituals sung in those rich Negro voices that make you weep (as someone has said) when they sing and laugh when they speak, give it a perfect staging, and success is inevitable. But not just the success of a well-made play. "The Green Pastures" purges the mind like tragedy. There has been no play in New York for years where the access to the deep emotions is so direct and sure. Mr. Connelly and Mr. Bradford are to be congratulated; but this is a triumph not so much for them as for the Bible. It is the poetry of the Bible that moves the audiences of "The Green Pastures," and their memories are stirred by the Negro story precisely as a Greek audience was moved to its racial depths by a heroic tragedy. One begins to understand what Omar meant when he ordered all books but the Koran burned. He was extreme perhaps, but his idea that a race with one great book is better off than a nation with ten thousand little ones has a good deal to commend it.

Stasis

By CLARA SHANAFELD

PAIN has a still and formal beauty
Like a stopped fountain in a garden sealed by frost;
A logic hard and durable like stone.

There is no need to weep, to abandon oneself,
To run in frenzy like Ariadne on the sands;
Here is no ear to hear, no eye to witness
Anguish—the ship has sailed too far;
No, though your love were beside you.

Only the room painted like a theatre.
Only the cold senseless eyes of three daffodils in a blue
Sea-water-rippled vase of Murano glass by the wall-mirror,
And the circle of light flung by the lamp on the ceiling,
Its arc cutting the crisp folds
Of the blue silk curtains;
The pattern of a rug intersected by the curve of a table's shadow.

These and the slow inflections of a chime
Dripping through the night like a sweet persuasive fountain,
Quarter after quarter the useless hours.

This Week

"The Life of Lady Byron."
Reviewed by SAMUEL C. CHEW.

"Adventurous America."
Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON.

"Crowd Your Luck on Death."
Reviewed by MARSHALL BEST.

"The Sweet Cheat Gone."
Reviewed by R. N. LINSCOTT.

"Cimarron."
Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL.

Unearned Income.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

The Portrait of a Century.
By DAVID CECIL.

The Cause and Cure of God*

By ELMER DAVIS

READERS of Henry Adams's autobiography will recall the scene in Victor Hugo's salon when Hugo, enthroned amid a swarm of worshippers, lifted his head after prolonged meditation and announced, "Quant à moi, je crois en Dieu." Whereupon a female devotee exclaimed, in pious ecstasy, "Chose sublime! Un dieu qui croit en Dieu!"

It is perhaps more sublime, and certainly rarer, to find a god who does not believe in any god, even himself. Mr. Mencken, whose more abandoned admirers have accorded him virtually divine honors for years past, offers a history and analysis of religion which, though chiefly devoted to Christianity, strikes at the religious spirit wherever found. If one may borrow a phrase from those excellent pacifist ladies, it might be called a treatise on the cause and cure of God. Mencken's explanation is simple enough; the cause is fear, the cure is knowledge. And if he thinks poorly of the gods he thinks pretty well of the best men; the bulk of the book is an account of human superstition and folly, but it includes some noble and moving epitaphies of human courage and intelligence.

There are, however, some qualifications. Mencken denies the name of religion to the mere belief that the universe, and man as part of it, is controlled by superior powers; that is only fatalism. The essence of religion, to his notion, lies in the view that "these powers take an interest in man, and may be influenced to favor him"; and that certain men and certain ceremonies are more likely to attain this favor than others. The priest, he holds, came before any clear concept of the god; the powers of Nature were personified only to prevent men from blaming their misfortunes on the failure of the priest. What Spinoza calls God, Mencken leaves out of account.

* * *

To the Neo-Spinozist view, then, this is a treatise on worship rather than theology; on man's attempt to make a contract with the ultimate realities rather than on their nature. The limitation is doubly justified from Mencken's point of view. In the first place we do not actually know the ultimate realities; science may picture their workings but we must approach their nature by metaphysics; and Mencken's contempt for metaphysics is far deeper than his half-tolerant deprecation of faith. What cannot be weighed and measured he refuses to consider at all. This may exclude a good deal of truth; but it certainly excludes a far greater amount of error.

Also there is nothing man can do about Spinoza's God, except to try to get around Him so far as human abilities permit; and with this endeavor Mencken appears to have little sympathy. He writes some eloquent hymns to the scientific spirit, but it is pure rather than applied science that inspires him; his notion of the good life is contemplative, not active. Doubtless his temperamental distaste for democracy and Rotarian ideals of Service makes him cold to efforts to improve the present state of things; but it leads him, logically enough, into the same position that Lippmann reached illogically from quite different premises. When Mencken says that the truly civilized man will get his satisfactions "out of a delight in the operations of the universe about him and of his own mind," one can only remark that the operations of the universe need to be considerably

*TREATISE ON THE GODS. By H. L. MENCKEN. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1930. $3.

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improved before the delight one feels in them can be called altogether civilized.

It is a pity that most people will form their verdict on this book before they read it. To devout Christians it must be foul blasphemy; while devout Menckenites will hold it literally inspired, even to the painfully numerous typographical errors. But there must be a considerable number of mavericks not yet herded into either round-up who can read it with frequent edification and almost continual pleasure. For if Mencken as a thinker is as emotionally biassed as the rest of us, he is a writer of extraordinary lucidity and (when he chooses to curb his exuberance) of extraordinary power. If Professor Foerster's thundering herd of Humanists included any man who could write half as well as Mencken, it would have a better chance of getting somewhere. But the book is uneven, in temper, reasoning, and style. In the preface, Mencken concedes that

> dismissing religion as a mere aberration is a proceeding that is far more lofty than sensible. . . . What brought it into the world was man's eternal wonder and his eternal hope. It represents one of his bold efforts—and perhaps not the least of them—to penetrate the unknowable, to put down the intolerable, to refashion the universe nearer to his heart's desire. My belief is that it is a poor device to that end—that when it is examined objectively it testifies to his imbecility quite as much as to his high striving. But that belief is only a belief.

* * *

However, a belief must commonly be acted upon, even by a quietist skeptic, so very soon we see Mencken treating religion as an aberration for all practical purposes, and attributing its power not so much to man's eternal wonder and eternal hope as to his eternal cowardice and greed. And the sober splendor of Mencken's prose at its best is too frequently intermitted by outbursts of spleen; too often he falls into the habit—a constant temptation to the controversial writer—of saying "all" when he means, or ought to mean, "most," and "always" when "usually" would be more accurate, if less picturesque.

Further, he writes as a layman—extremely erudite, to be sure—in the fields of anthropology and theology. Now a layman is apt to hit, by the mere exercise of common sense, on something so obvious that it had escaped the notice of the experts; he is

ephah of barley, but in the narrow field where I am competent to check up on him I note several howlers. Some of them may be mere slips of memory, none of them materially affects his argument; but every one is a chink in his armor, through which the soldier of the Lord may thrust an avenging dart. His bibliography is immense; but I suspect he has occasionally leaned on the more picturesque authorities rather than the more prosaic and trustworthy. And it is a pity that the book has these faults, for it is a powerful argument, one of the best that has been written, in behalf of man's right and man's ability to seek and find the truth; and against "the effort of the theologians to occupy all the areas not yet conquered by science—in other words, their bold claim that what no one knows is their special province, that ignorance itself is a superior kind of knowledge, that their most preposterous guess must hold good until it is disproved."

Mencken has more use for a candid obscurantist than for men like Millikan and Eddington who try to reconcile religion and science. They do it, he says, by "admitting, however cautiously, that religion is somehow superior to science, and is thus entitled to all the territories that remain unoccupied." Their notion that science does not concern itself with origins and causes is unsound; "if it could, science would explain the origin of life on earth at once—and there is every reason to believe that it will do so on some not too remote to-morrow." The Church, he points out, is under no such illusions. Every priest

> knows that every time the bounds of exact science are widened, however modestly, the domain of religion is correspondingly narrowed. If Christian theologians admit today that the world is round and revolves around the sun, it is only because they can't help themselves. . . . So long as they could do so safely they denounced it bitterly, and launched their most blistering anathemas upon those who defended it.

Basing himself on White's "Warfare of Science with Theology" he points out that the technique of the Church in dealing with truth has usually been first to fight it, then to try "to force some element of orthodoxy into the heresy," then to discover that it is not a heresy at all; and finally to declare that the Church was never against it, and to add this new jewel of truth to the crown of the Bride of Christ. As Mr. Felix Morrow points out in the current *Menorah Journal*, what is politely called "the evolution of religion" is really the steady retreat of religion from one untenable position to another, under criticism, ethical and scientific, from outside.

Whether or not there are realities that science can never grasp, whether or not—a quite different question from the first, though often confused with it— theology of any sort has grasped them, this is the actual historical record of the dealings of the Church, Catholic or Protestant, with the advances of human knowledge. The view that only religion can grasp the ultimate imponderables may be correct; but its plausibility is somewhat impaired by the fact that religion once claimed by the same divine right a knowledge of the shape of the earth and the organization of the solar system which turned out to be utterly wrong. Trust Eddington's intuitions if you like, but remember the ashes of Giordano Bruno.

* * *

Mencken performs, to this reviewer's notion, so great a service in pounding in this idea that his errors in detail are negligible except in so far as they give the enemy a come-back. What anthropologists may think of the opening chapter on the nature and origin of religion the layman cannot guess, but it makes excellent reading. The picture of the Dawn Man, incurably worried by "a new curse, the power to think," and trying to evade his troubles by three courses which became the rudiments of science, poetry, and religion, is immensely entertaining, and so is the picture of the man who became the first priest—beating, in hopeless rage, the rising river which had just carried off his wife and children and threatened to sweep away the rest of the tribe; and receiving the awed worship of his neighbors when, next morning, the flood had receded. Mencken will hear nothing of the difference between magic and religion, but he bases his argument on the magical mechanics of sacramental acts. A purely naturalistic reasoning could have

a patriarchal basis, 's discovery of
the physiological fa But the great
force for the prom ining through
all the ages he fi advantages it
gave to the priests rtune laymen
turned to the expert who might avert the wrath of the gods; they were apt to remember his successes rather than his failures; and what he had gained he did not easily let the advance of knowledge take away.

* * *

Most of the book is devoted to the treatment of Christianity, of course. The clergy may be surprised to find Mencken's extended discussion of Jesus quite as respectful as that ordinarily dispensed from the pulpit, and considerably more intelligent. Everyone who tries to get at what really happened through the exaggerations and contradictions of the Gospels gets into difficulties; what Mencken makes out of it may not be true in all points, but at least it is coherent, plausible, and rational. He does not attempt an explanation of the Resurrection, but apparently leans to the view that Jesus came to in the Sepulchre and was somehow removed living. This, however, raises the difficult question, What ultimately became of Jesus? George Moore's answer is perhaps as good as any. Modern psychology and historical criticism would perhaps suggest a more plausible alternative, but the point is irrelevant; as Mencken observes, it was not what happened that counted, but what men thought had happened.

A more serious omission is the slighting of the part played by St. Paul, and to a lesser extent by St. Peter, in the establishing of the Church. The pun that made Peter the Rock on which the Church was to be built could hardly have gained currency if there had not been a living tradition that Peter was the rock on which the Church somehow had been built; and the ground of that tradition can most plausibly be found in I Corinthians 15:5. Here is our earliest testimony on the Resurrection; and it tells us that Peter was the first who saw (or thought he saw) Jesus alive again after the Crucifixion. That is the only thing in Peter's record that can account for his primacy.

As for St. Paul, Christianity without him would have been as different as the *Mercury* without Mencken. It may be, as Mencken seems to think, that Christianity has survived because "it alone among the modern world religions has an opulent esthetic content," and is "full of a lush and lovely poetry." Mencken, the faithful need hardly be reminded, despises poetry as milk for babes; "theology and poetry are both based on the theory that it is better to believe what is false than to suffer what is true." But he finds the life of Jesus, especially in Luke, "the most lovely story that the human fancy has ever devised"; and he thinks that modern Christians, throwing off the traditional theology, are trying to save Christian poetry by such movements as Rotarianism. All of which may be true, so far; but it remains doubtful if Christianity would ever have got west of Antioch, or made more than a handful of Gentile converts, if Paul had not made it over into something else.

* * *

Well, what about the future? "The Catholic church," says Mencken, "shows a much greater limberness than any other Christian church, and so it seems likely to survive all the rest." True, its clergy "have little respect for human intelligence, and indeed little belief in its existence. . . . But this does not prove them stupid; far from it!" As for Protestantism, it suffers from two inoperable cancers; the errors of "assuming that all Christians were really Christians, and that they were intelligent enough to ascertain and embrace the truth." The logician reasons that Protestantism is doomed to disappearance; Mencken does not seem to think so, for it is "endurable only to hinds," and hence congenial to the yokelry and booboisie. (These terms of the hieratic language of Menckenism do not appear in the book, but their content is there.) Nor does he look for Church union; indeed he thinks it possible that American Catholicism will break off in a great schism, once the antipathy between many of its practices and Roman doctrine is realized. One might conjecture further that if Al Smith had been elected President and had lived up to the reasoning of his and Father Duffy's answer to Marshall, the late papal encyclical on education might have given the
re probably, it would never

Mencken thinks religion—and poetry—are bound to go.

> That modern man still needs such consolation is no more than proof that the history of human progress has just begun —that he is yet much nearer to the ape than he is to the cherubim. . . . Religion is, in its very nature, a machine for scaring; it must needs fail and break down as man gains more and more knowledge, for knowledge is not only power; it is courage.

The theologians argue that man needs the consolations of religion for his happiness, but the truly civilized man can do without happiness.

> It is not a soul that he has acquired; it is a way of thinking, a way of looking at the universe, a way of facing the impenetrable dark that must engulf him in the end, as it engulfs the birds of the air and the protozoa in the sea ooze. Thus he faces death the inexorable, not perhaps with complete serenity, but at least with dignity, calm, a brave spirit. If he has not proved positively that religion is not true, then he has certainly proved that it is not necessary. Men may live decently without it, and they may die courageously without it.

Here is a statement of faith that shames the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. But a moment later Mencken, confirmed misanthropist and anti-democrat, hurries to make it plain that this does not mean all men.

> The capacity for that proud imperturbability is rare in the race—maybe as rare as the capacity for honor. For the rest there must be faith, as there must be morals. It is their fate to live absurdly, flogged by categorical imperatives of their own shallow imagining, and to die insanely, grasping for hands that are not there.

So it may be, at the moment. But even the man in the street has got round to the idea that the earth is spherical, and moves round the sun—and that in only three hundred years. Surely a few millennia may increase the proportion of "truly civilized men" to something respectable. Is it impiety to suggest that this desirable consummation is likely to arrive a little sooner if we try to do something about it—even though our endeavors may occasionally seem a bit Rotarian—instead of climbing into the ivory tower and pulling the ladder up after us?

The book does not lack an index, but it is a pity that no one took the trouble to read proof on the frequent Latin phrases.

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Vagaries of Human Nature

THE LIFE OF LADY BYRON. By Ethel Colburn Mayne. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1929. $5.

Reviewed by Samuel C. Chew

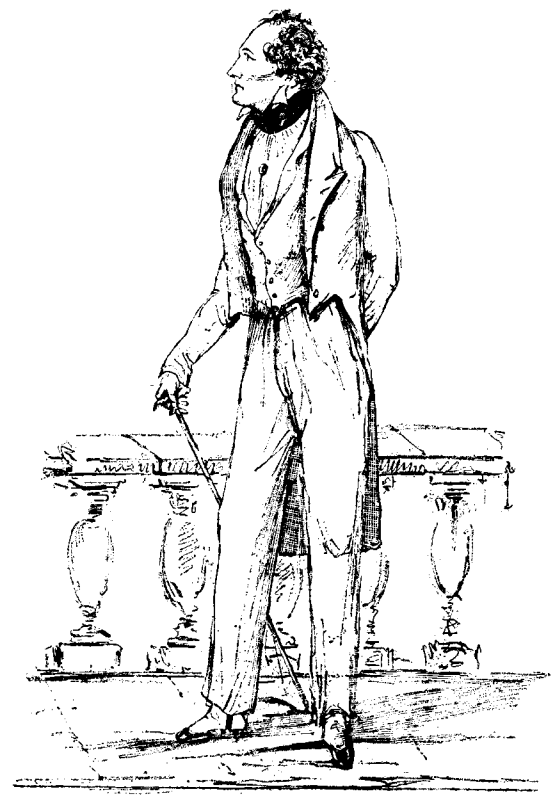
MISS MAYNE'S biography of Byron (1912) was the first to be based on the revelations made by Lord Lovelace in "Astarte." At the time and for long after it seemed to many of us that in accepting Lord Lovelace's book as authoritative Miss Mayne showed herself not so much shrewd as credulous, for "Astarte," unsupported by any other documents, certainly did not establish Lord Lovelace's case against his grandfather. Not until the publication in 1922 of Byron's letters to Lady Melbourne did it become morally impossible to acquit Byron and Augusta Leigh of the notorious charges brought against them; and even then though morally impossible it was not legally impossible as anyone knows who has read the opening chapter ("The Byron Problem") of John Drinkwater's "Pilgrim of Eternity." The verdict which Mr. Drinkwater reached was the Scotch one "not proven." Such a verdict, in the light of the new documents which Miss Mayne now publishes in her biography of Lady Byron, it would be difficult to maintain. It may be said indeed that there is no longer a "Byron Problem"—or rather the problem is that of the vagaries of human nature.

For her life of Byron, Miss Mayne did not have access to the papers in the collection of the late Earl of Lovelace. Her acceptance of his book brought her, however, into touch with his widow, Mary, Countess of Lovelace, who has permitted her to make use of a great mass of documentary material (including letters of both Lord and Lady Byron) never hitherto published. So lucidly is this material arranged and presented to us in Miss Mayne's new book that one wishes that a quarter of a century ago Lord Lovelace had delegated to her the task of revealing to the world the truth about Lord Byron, Lady Byron, Augusta Leigh, and Medora Leigh. We should then have had a plain, dignified, and unanswerable statement of the case instead of the amazing farrago of pedantry, pride, arrogance, and bad temper which is "Astarte" and which so strangely (or perhaps not so strangely) won the commendation of Henry James.

Though Miss Mayne has devoted five hundred pages to the story of Lady Byron's life she would be ready to admit, I am sure, that the story was worth the telling only because her subject was the wife of Lord Byron. Had Annabella Milbanke not married a great genius she would have been known but to her own circle in her day and would be completely forgotten in ours. That she had some small talent as a mathematician, that she was highly connected in English society, and that she had qualities that won for her the friendship of various estimable persons are facts not sufficient, in themselves, to keep her name above the waters of oblivion. She is memorable only as the wife of a genius. Wherever and whenever her life touches the orbit of Lord Byron it is of lasting, tragic interest, whether we see her as a hesitating, prudish, and somewhat priggish young girl, the spoiled only chilld of elderly parents, or as the betrothed of the young poet in the heyday of his renown, or as the unhappily married and cruelly mistreated wife, or after the separation, bearing in dignified silence outrageous public attacks, from Byron and the newspapers, upon her character, and so strangely befriending Mrs. Leigh despite her conviction that her sister-in-law was guilty of incest, or as an older woman protecting Medora Leigh, the unhappy and disgraced child of that incest, or finally in her last years assuming the responsibility of bringing up Ralph King, the grandson who was destined long after her death to reveal what she so carefully guarded—Lady Byron is of interest to us, we must repeat, only in so far as her fate is intertwined with that of her husband and her husband's kin. After the cruel shock of her marriage and separation she rallied bravely and attempted to make a new life for herself, becoming interested in various philanthropic works; but she lived out her long life in the shadow of Byron and Byronism. Miss Mayne aptly reminds us of the curse in "Manfred":

> Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
> Thou art gathered in a cloud,
> And for ever, shalt thou dwell
> In the spirit of this spell.

Though there is, then, no longer any question of Byron's and Augusta's guilt, there remains the very puzzling question of Lady Byron's relations with Augusta, both during the year of her marriage and after the separation. Byron, in his most caddish mood, within a few weeks of his wedding day tormented his wife with innuendoes regarding the paternity of Medora Leigh. Her reluctant suspicions swiftly became certainties, yet she was glad to have Augusta as a guest in London during the year of marriage, and remained on terms of intimacy with her after the separation. Not until many years after Byron's death were the two women alienated. Why did she for so long remain the affectionate friend of the woman of whose guilt she was convinced? It cannot be said, and Miss Mayne would be the last person to make the claim, that Lady Byron's biographer supplies a complete answer to this important question. Important it is, for defenders of Lord Byron against the accusations in "Astarte" have in part rested their case upon the inconceivability of a wronged wife remaining the intimate friend of a woman guilty as Mrs. Leigh was guilty. Inconceivable perhaps, but none the less a fact, and



LORD BYRON
From a sketch of Count D. Orsay.

explicable, so far as it is explicable at all, on the grounds first, that Mrs. Leigh's incestuous relations with her brother were previous to his marriage; second, that her presence in the household of Lord and Lady Byron mitigated Byron's ferocity toward his wife; and third, that Lady Byron had to a morbid degree the desire to redeem and reclaim the "fallen" and was convinced of the sincerity of Augusta's repentance. Yet even when so much is said the case of Lady Byron and Mrs. Leigh remains surely pretty nearly unique in the annals of human relationships.

An Invaluable Handbook

POLITICAL HANDBOOK OF THE WORLD: 1930. Edited by Walter H. Mallory. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1930.

Reviewed by Henry Kittredge Norton

THE third annual issue of this invaluable handbook maintains the high standard set in the earlier volumes. A handy reference book containing accurate information as to the governments, parties, and principal newspapers, is indispensable to the worker in international relations and this compilation, covering every country in the world, fills every need—except one. The cabinets are only referred to as being of this or that party or as a coalition. Their personnel is not given. It may be urged that cabinets change too often to list them. This may be true of some countries, but in the main they change no oftener than the premiers, whose names are given. If the personnel and affiliations of the cabinet members could be included, we should have a work well-nigh perfectly adapted to its purpose.

Antonio Betramelli, noted novelist and member of the Royal Academy of Italy, died recently in Rome. He was the author of a biography of Mussolini.

Myths and Realities

ADVENTUROUS AMERICA, A Study in Contemporary Life and Thought. By Edwin Mims. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by Arthur Colton

IN American provincial households a half century ago it was commonly supposed that the French were a frivolous, excitable people, vain and violent, polite but insincere. The German of the then typical vision was a learned innocent, round-faced and spectacled, who has since been strangely revolutionized into a drilled ruffian, all boots, bayonet, and brutality. There are more or less assignable reasons for those myths, but still they are myths. America was once in European eyes the romantic heir of the Hesperides; there was the noble Red Man and uncontaminated Nature. Then it became a symbol of democracy and freedom; then a warning example of bad manners and corrupt politics; lately it has been an amalgam of swollen riches, mechanization, standardized uniformity, quantity poured out and quality lost, alcohol banned and crime permitted, Rotarian Babbittry in dull, ugly towns; a land of jazz, movies, and noise. The items are many. There is something behind them all. But the pictures are myths. The movies are creating myths about America all over the world; much as the conventional French novel, with its eternal triangle, created a myth about French society.

Most myths have, or have had, some reality at their bases, sometimes very slight, sometimes considerable. All myths must start from something. But the whole reality is multiplex and contradictory, the myth always effectively false. One myth gets substituted for another when circumstances combine to fix foreign attention on one feature, or characteristic, or type, in place of another. Myths current in any country about itself usually represent the mood of an era, or generation, or decade. There was a pre-war German myth represented by Houston Chamberlain and his Nordics. Of certain post-war myths (partly imported, partly exhaling from American soil, and each with its crop of prophets) Professor Mims's "Adventurous America" is pression of rather more than critical suspicion not from the standpoint of an outsider, a academic survivor of an age gone by, for Professor Mims has been to school to "modernity."

Professor Mims's volume was born of a letter from a friend, in which Professor Mims was described as a mild Victorian, who lived with the great Victorians, Carlyle, Tennyson, Browning, Poe. "In that niche you are cloistered and safe," wrote his correspondent.

> You sound the shibboleths of text books. I live in another world, a world of eddies and rapids and waterfalls, hazardous and beset with perils, in company with Shaw, Croce, Inge, Bergson, Proust, Nietzsche, Brandes, Joyce, Schnitzler, the potential classics of the future. I breathe this fresh invigorating air (even though it has its stenches) with keen delight, snuffing it gaily up my nostrils I live dangerously in literary criticism. . . .

The correspondent's enthusiasms seems a little miscellaneous and his perils a little exaggerated. Without admitting the whole of the indictment Professor Mims felt, however, that there was something in it. He devoted himself for several years thereafter to an intensive and extensive education in "modernity." He read everything that seemed of any importance, novelists, poets, dramatists, critics, biographers, philosophers, sociologists, French, Russian, English, American. "I spent a year in Europe reading widely." He came back and gave courses in contemporary literature. He worked with zest and energy, and felt himself grow. Bertrand Russell, Carl Sandburg, Sinclair Lewis, Henry Adams, Strachey, Spengler, Keyserling, T. S. Eliot, satirists of every phase of scorn, Jeremiahs of all kinds of despair, free verse and psychologic prose, all passed through his system. "I think I have not missed a single copy of the *American Mercury*—I shared the disillusionment of my generation that came with the aftermath of war." He felt with justice that at last he knew something about it. "In the spring of 1929 I felt that I had finished this phase of my education when I read Joseph Wood Krutch's 'The Modern Spirit,' in which all the disillusionment, the scepticism, the debunking of traditions and sentiments, the deterministic philosophy, the futility of search for any abiding faith, find adequate and felicitous expression." It is a Godless and loveless universe. All hope abandon ye who enter here.

But in his quest of the modern spirit Professor

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Mims was not able, like so many younger men, to forget what he had read before; and in defense of his memories is able to quote from leaders of the modern spirit, from Whitehead that "one of the worst provincialisms is the provincialism of time," and from Santayana that "we do not today refute our predecessors but bid them goodbye." There are many versions of the Everlasting Nay; but there are versions of the Everlasting Yea, both old and new, which are not complacent optimisms of boost clubs and popular periodicals. Professor Mims's optimism has emerged from looking the worst in the face. He does not like the Rotarian or the smart aleck any better than he likes the defeatist and futilitarian; only he does not think the prospect as dreary as it is painted. There is at least a fighting chance. Adventurous America is no place, and this is no era, to lie down in and wail over either your own sins or the stupidities of everyone else. We are not living in a decadent time. If you look the facts in the face, they do not show that. It looks more like the early years of a vital and vivid era. The futilitarians and embittered realists have made a myth. They have not made it out of nothing. It is partly fact, some of the facts, and partly mood.

Professor Mims's main contention may be admitted, but the younger generation will probably feel that his real point of view is still mildly Victorian. He has not been through all their emotional reactions. His education in modernity broadened but did not revolutionize him. He has gone to school to modernity, but has scarcely lived it. His idealism is founded on the present, but it has reminiscent flavors. He says nothing about "getting back to the normal," but he has something of that feeling. Normal is a word of inferior repute since the Harding era, and we do not exactly want to get back to anything. We want to find out where we are going, and go there.

Nevertheless, in that matter of direction, his faith that despair, disgust, and vituperation will not be the dominant notes of the next decade, is a good probability. There will probably be less dissolvent and more assimilation, less clutter and more clarity, less lumping of miscellaneous dislikes under epithets and more articulation of whatever faith may be coming our way.

The Mayor of Tombarel

THE TOWN OF TOMBAREL. By WILLIAM J. LOCKE. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

ADMIRERS of Locke who have come to deplore a sameness of mood in his recent books, and who have felt that whimsicality and sentiment can cloy if too perseveringly indulged in, will rejoice to find in this volume a stiffer fibre than has been generally evident in his latest works. Mr. Locke is still whimsical, but his whimsy now lies rather in the ingenuity with which he justifies unconventional action than in unconventional action itself. He still has sentiment, but it is less sweet than has lately been its wont, more tinctured by that good-humored cynicism which lent an edge to his first books. That he still writes with vivacity and grace should go without saying.

"The Town of Tombarel" is actually a succession of nine short stories brought into relation through the appearance in all of the narrator, an English author, and Monsieur Tombarel, wine-grower, *grand seigneur*, and Mayor of the Provençal village of Creille, whose inhabitants hover more or less persistently in the background of the tales. Tombarel is a Mistral in appearance, a very perfect gentleman in courtesy, and in practice a thorough-going realist who can justify the ways of man to his conscience with a most nice and logical philosophy. To his English friend he recites a series of episodes—the tale of a father's violent act to preserve untarnished the memory of his war dead, of the amazing marriage between a vagabond scoundrel and the carefully nurtured woman whose husband he attempts to kill, of the demi-mondaine who supports the peasant family she loves on money whose source can only be kept from them by connivance of the Mayor, of his own Love story with a capital L, and his love story without the capital that implies to his mind the making or marring of a man's career. They all unfold with the leisurely good-fellowship which might be expected of Mr. Locke when he acts as foil for a French official of parts, humane spirit, and shrewdness disguised as ingenuousness.

These stories, indeed, are interesting quite apart from their plots as reflecting the hard-headed practicality of the French outlook on life. They have a buoyancy that carries them along, freshness of incident, and sprightly dialogue that is well salted with a sly humor. And they have a tautness of sentiment which has been too often lacking of late from Mr. Locke's work. We find "The Town of Tombarel" the most interesting book that he has produced in some years.

Night Life

SLEEP. By DONALD A. LAIRD and CHARLES G. MULLER. New York: The John Day Company. 1930. $2.50.

HAVE you ever awakened to have your blood run cold at the sound of prowling footsteps in the hallway or the rustling of a burglar under the bed? That may be because the pressure of the pillow on your ear has started internal sounds. Have you ever dreamt that you were Doctor Cook at the North Pole? Perchance that's because your foot has been uncovered and has grown very cold. Have you ever had a sleepless night and blamed a cup of coffee drunk at midnight for it? It's quite likely it was not the coffee but the game of bridge upon which your mind was intent until the stroke of twelve that was responsible for it. Have you ever slept the long, dreamless sleep of the just after a steaming nightcap? Well, that's perhaps because a little, oh, just a wee small amount of liquor seems to be conducive to peaceful slumber.

At least so says the psychological laboratory of Colgate University whose staff for some years now have been carrying on experiments designed to discover what it is that best induces to healthful sleep and to what extent mankind must have sleep in order best to fulfil its capacities. This book, the by-product of those investigations, makes no pretense at scientific exhaustiveness; it is merely a skimming of the results obtained and a codification of those facts into a few generalizations that should be both helpful and interesting to the lay public. We commend it to you if you are on the lookout for a book that will keep you wakeful until you deem it time to go to bed, and that will allow you to drop off to pleasant slumbers the moment your head touches the pillow.

If you are one of the unfortunate persons to whom sleep does not come easily, either because you are emotionally, physically, or intellectually overstimulated, or because you are sensitive to external disturbances, you will find it more inclined to your wooing if you seek it in a room tinted in green or blue, carpeted and curtained in velour, furnished with a double bed with a coil spring and a mattress of medium softness, with sheets wide enough to hang over the side of the bedstead, blankets of soft wool, and a velour spread,—a room, of course, as remote from the noises of the street as possible, through which air is moving, which is moderate in temperature, and from which light is excluded. If you would sleep most effectively, don't roll up into a ball; on the other hand, don't stretch out like an arrow. Sink down into the bed, and let your knees sag slightly. It makes little difference apparently whether you sleep on your side or on your back, except that in the latter position you are likely to be guilty of snoring. The time of your deepest sleep is in the first hour or two of your slumbers; but the hour of profoundest relaxation is later. As to the number of hours of sleep your system demands, that depends entirely upon your temperament, your activities, your age, and the character of your slumber. Edison has on occasion managed very comfortably, and with no diminution of mental alertness, on a daily average of less than four hours, while Woodrow Wilson, on the other hand, needed nine, and preferred, ten hours of sleep. The average intellectual worker, according to Colgate calculations, needs at least eight hours of sleep, though for the lumberjack, longshoreman, or manual worker half that number may be sufficient.

If you sleep as an average grown person should, assuming that you will live to the age of seventy, you will, if you are now thirty, sleep before you die thirteen years, four months, one day, and sixteen hours; if you are forty, you will sleep ten years, if you are fifty, you will sleep six years, eight months, three days, and eight hours.

"Oh! sleep, it is a gentle thing, Beloved from pole to pole." On the whole, considering its effect on health and usefulness as set forth in the first part of this volume, it would seem wise to disregard Mark Twain's admonition not to go to bed, since so many people die there. But read the book if you would discover why you get sleepy, why you ought to sleep, and how to get sleep.

Crowd Your Luck

CROWD YOUR LUCK ON DEATH. By HARRY KAPUSTIN. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARSHALL BEST

A QUALITY that cannot be too highly valued in fiction today will be pounced upon with excitement by readers of this new story-teller named Harry Kapustin. Even the least of his stories is quick with life—directly presented, without too much cerebration, without embroidery, without distortion for dramatic effects or sentimental uses. He seizes the essence of certain simple emotions and conveys it in a blunt, economical narrative, pungent with the language of his characters.

His best stories (they are often only sketches) are about the new Americans: streetcar conductors named Chimabua, typists named Mollie Appleyard, clerks and poolroom habitués named Willie and Herbie. Mr. Kapustin writes as one of them; they are his important world, and thus he escapes the sentimentality of the ordinary observer. He catches the meaning of their lives in domestic tragedies such as "Don't Bury Me at All" and "Mrs. Appleyard Will Cry"; or the meaninglessness of them as in "Embezner Embazner Emboozner," the haunting little sketch of a man with delusions of greatness—a greatness which aspires no higher than to being a famous movie star. His fantasies in exotic settings, such as "Kark," have similar pungency but less importance; when he becomes slightly mystical, as in "The Deep Kindergarten," he is on less certain ground. In all he flaunts life's ugliness with a sort of sardonic arrogance. Obsession and death are favorite themes. But his cynicism is positive rather than defeatist: death is the lucky number—crowd your luck!

As an artist, Mr. Kapustin betrays his youth by being afraid to be careful. Before he can be taken very seriously he needs to learn that his originality is in his point of view and the directness of his narration, rather than in the scorn for language, and the hit-or-miss technique that are the outward signs of his revolt. Nevertheless "Crowd Your Luck on Death" can be read with the zest of a discovery. It is in healthy contrast not only with the magazine stereotype of American fiction but with the debased coinage which the literary young men and women of England are making from the mold of Chekhov and Katherine Mansfield.

THE books listed below have been read with interest by the Editors of THE SATURDAY REVIEW *and have seemed to us worthy of special recommendation to our subscribers. It is our desire to bring to the attention of our readers books of real excellence, especially books by new or not widely known authors, which may not get the recognition which we believe they deserve.*

★ PENDING HEAVEN. By WILLIAM GERHARDI. Harpers.
"Scandalously amusing fun of literary people, philanderers, infelicitous husbands, incomplete amorists."

★ THE MAN WHO LOST HIMSELF. By OSBERT SITWELL. Coward-McCann.
A subtle and beautifully written story of the artist soul suffering deterioration and seeking recovery in travel.

★ HUMANISM AND AMERICA. Edited by NORMAN FOERSTER. Farrar & Rinehart.
The manifesto of the Humanists in the form of a compendium of articles by representative exponents of their faith.

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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The Penultimate Proust

THE SWEET CHEAT GONE: Part Seven of "Remembrance of Things Past." By MARCEL PROUST. New York: Albert & Charles Boni. 1930. $3.

Reviewed by R. N. LINSCOTT

BEYOND any other novelist, Proust gives us the pleasure of discovery and recognition. With infinite delicacy, with endless patience, he explores like an ominiscient ant through the jungle of consciousness, exacting from every experience its ultimate and significant elements. In addition to his skill in penetrating the tough outer surface of reality and extending the boundaries of knowledge, he is now seen to be a master of structure; of the symphonic pattern. As he wrote to his publisher, apropos of "Remembrance of Things Past," "the composition is so complex that it becomes apparent only very late in the day, when all the themes have begun to combine." With the translation of the last but one of the eight parts, the pattern can now be traced as a continuous process of evolution in the characters, and disillusion in the narrator. The Guermantes, for example, first seen at a height as the romantic exemplars of the aristocratic tradition, undergo innumerable modifications in perspective as the narrator approaches, and when met at last on the level are perceived to share the ineptitudes and cruelties of the common herd. In short, the world of Proust is a world of continual change and constant illusion whose only reality is the inner consciousness and whose only justification is the integrity of the artist who creates; a world curiously paralleling in many respects the metaphysical world of the new physicists.

But an exploration of the Proustian universe lies beyond the scope of the present review. It will be recalled that "The Captive" closed with the flight of Albertine from her jealous and exigent lover Since, by a singular perversity, his love waxes and wanes in exact antithesis to her own, we find him in the opening pages of the new volume overwhelmed by her escape and wildly planning her recovery. Negotiations are cut short by a fatal accident. His mistress is thrown from her horse and killed, and the Albertine *motif*, first announced in "Within a Budding Grove," reintroduced in "The Guermantes Way," and dominant in "The Captive," rises to a crescendo of grief and pain, that slowly dies away in an exquisite diminuendo of fading memories.

* * *

It was Proust's theory that voluntary memory compares with involuntary as a photograph with a painting; that we touch the innermost core of reality only in the secondary sensations evoked by some sight, sound, or odor which automatically draws into our consciousness a fragment of the forgotten past, brightly tinted as a shell drawn from the sea. For this reason, Albertine dead is more living than Albertine alive, for now that death has put distance between them, every moment brings back memories that revivify the past. Her complete possession had been for years his goal and his chimera. Within his arms she eluded him; within the grave she is his, and his greatest grief is the knowledge that grief will not endure. The theme of these memories and of their slow inevitable dispersal, as time conquers love, is played with infinite variations and modulations.

The cool evening air came in; it was the sun setting in my memory, at the end of a road which we had taken, she and I, on our way home, that I saw now, more remote than the farthest village, like some distant town not to be reached that evening, which we would spend at Balbec, still together. Together then, now I must stop short on the brink of that same abyss; she was dead. It was not enough now to draw the curtains, I tried to stop the eyes and ears of my memory so as not to see that band of orange in the western sky, so as not to hear those invisible birds responding from one tree to the next on either side of me who was then so tenderly embraced by her that now was dead. I tried to avoid those sensations that are given us by the dampness of leaves in the evening air, the steep rise and fall of mule-tracks. But already those sensations had gripped me afresh, carried far enough back from the present moment so that it should have gathered all the recoil, all the resilience necessary to strike me afresh, this idea that Albertine was dead.

. . . On certain nights, having gone to sleep almost without regretting Albertine any more—we can regret only what we remember—on awakening I found a whole fleet of memories which had come to cruise upon the surface of my clearest consciousness, and seemed marvellously distinct. Then I wept over what I could see so plainly, what overnight had been to me non-existent. In an instant, Albertine's name, her death, had changed their meaning; her betrayals had suddenly resumed their old importance.

. . . At other times, without my having dreamed, as soon as I awoke, I felt that the wind had changed in me; it was blowing coldly and steadily from another direction, issuing from the remotest past, bringing back to me the sound of a clock striking far-off hours, of the whistle of departing trains which I did not ordinarily hear.

Dying as he did before the publication of "The Sweet Cheat Gone," Proust was unable to give it the same gigantic and meticulous revision in proof that he gave each of the preceding volumes. With the passing of Albertine, the narrative grows cramped. There is no longer the sense of spacious and leisurely handling of material; the turning of each sensation over and over until the last of its innumerable facets has been displayed and examined. The visit to Venice, anticipated since childhood, is disposed of almost casually. Robert de Saint-Loup marries Gilberte who has found it expedient to bury in oblivion her father, Swann, with the result that both the name and memory of that singularly noble Jew have perished. The niece of Jupien, the tailor, having been adopted by M. de Charlus, marries the son of the Marquise Cambremer-Legrandin, and with delicious irony, plunges

EDNA FERBER
From a drawing of Mary McKinnon

half the princely houses of Europe into mourning by her death. The sense of moral and spiritual blight, first evident in "Cities of the Plain" and checked by the lyric passages of grief and recollection, has resumed its advance. The old order is breaking up; time, the integrating element in the Proustian universe, leaps forward. The rising tide of homosexuality engulfs even the heroic figure of Saint-Loup, and the book ends on a note of disorder and decay.

Miss Ferber's Myth

CIMARRON. By EDNA FERBER. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL

Author of "Kit Carson"

WE have long since become accustomed to the habit of English novelists, who come to this country for a brief visit and then go home and write a book about the States. But for an American novelist to apply the same methods in writing about an unfamiliar region within the States is something of a novelty. Miss Ferber has done this in her new book on Oklahoma, and done it daringly, adding American efficiency to the tried technique of her British exemplars. For she spent far less time in Oklahoma than the Englishman commonly spends in the States, and the resulting book is vastly more interesting than most which have been produced by others in this kind. Indeed, it is probable that Miss Ferber's success is due in no small degree to the shortness of her sojourn in the West, for she could hardly have remained much longer without suspecting that she was being made the victim of extravagant Western humor. Her coming was well advertised in advance, and the hospitable natives provided her with a good show. But Miss Ferber may take comfort, if not exult, in the ire which her book has aroused in the breasts of indignant old-timers, who—rather absurdly—expect a novel to be history.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the business of the novel is not plot, nor setting, nor incident, but the notation of the human heart. Since Miss Ferber's triumphant journalism has rather neglected this important business, she can scarcely blame those who concentrate upon the things which she has placed in the foreground and who criticize her work accordingly. In a volume wherein the tourist's notebook and photograph album so constantly obtrude, it is natural that readers who have notebooks and albums more extensive and reliable should compare notes and raise objections.

It is quite unfair, however, to complain of her use of incident or even of the falsification of dates, places, and historical events: all this is quite within the province and privilege of the novelist. When Zane Grey, for example, portrays Kit Carson as a swaggering bully, he is well within his rights, though utterly false to history. Such things may be unwise, but are thoroughly legitimate. But when the poet presents the spirit of a region or a period in a false light, we incline to think that he has violated the canons of the historical novel and deserves censure.

The really significant things in any community are the things which that community takes for granted, and these things are never mentioned, and can hardly be explained to strangers. We submit that this is the weakness of Miss Ferber's attempt to tell the story of the Run—that famous charge of a vast multitude upon the free land of Oklahoma: she was unaware of the real historical background, the mores, of the time and region. And this need not have been so, considering the wealth of authentic incident she had at her command. Willa Cather, another alien who writes of the Southwest, avoided this pitfall: she used all the liberties of the artist in fiction, freely adapting and falsifying incident and character, yet has uniformly preserved intact the spirit of the Old Southwest. Her bad men observe the mores of the type, as Miss Ferber's do not, and by this test the one book stands and the other falls. Miss Ferber's gunmen (I use the term advisedly) are presented sympathetically, humanly, but they know nothing of the code which would have made it impossible for a cowboy to shoot a man's hat off in the company of his wife, or to take pot sho a preacher during a religious service—even one in a gambler's tent. The grotesqueries of the were wild enough, but they are not the grotesqueries which Miss Ferber has invented.

The later chapters, which deal with matters observed by the author for herself, are more acceptable, but even here the feeling which underlies them has escaped her. She has done excellent reporting, has constructed a ripping yarn, has given us novel incidents, novel characters, a fresh setting, has created a strange new Sooner* mythology, and for this we should be grateful. Her book is a fantasy.

Judged as fantasy, it is a gorgeous piece of work, and recalls at moments the richness of startling incident, the amazing turns, the incredible adventures and persons of the "Arabian Nights." And as fantasy her book is sound, for it has caught the essential fact about Oklahoma — the fact that there every man has the spirit of a seeker after buried treasures; every man has the fairyland faith in something for nothing, a faith justified every time he looks at the skyscrapers of Tulsa or the oil rigs of Oklahoma City. This spirit, which was not the spirit of the Run, has become the soul of Oklahoma today, and Miss Ferber's reporting eye has caught it. To her this was all unreal, fantastic, and no genius could have made her book historical. So seen, the book is genuine and worth the reading.

The Society of Colonial Dames of America and the National Society of Colonial Dames in the State of New York have awarded a prize of $1000 to Dr. Richard B. Morris for his book, entitled "Studies in the History of American Law," published by the Columbia University Press. Honorable mention was given to Mr. Michael Krauss for his "Inter-Colonial Aspects of American Culture on the Eve of the Revolution," also published by the Columbia University Press, and to Mr. Pell for his "Ethan Allen," published by Houghton Mifflin Co.

The two societies of Colonial Dames offered one thousand dollars in 1926 for the best work on some phase of the colonial period in American history by a citizen of the State of New York, published during the five years preceding January first, 1929.

* A "Sooner" was a settler who had illegitimately found his way into Indian territory before it was thrown open for settlement. The "Sooners" are the Hengists and Horsas of Oklahoma.

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The Bowling Green

Unearned Income

THE hopeful pang with which one dips, for the first time, in a new ink-bottle . . . the sound of wind at night in bare trees . . . waking up on a morning when you don't have to go anywhere . . . an engagement book without any appointments in it . . . fooling a dog into eating dog-biscuits by rubbing sausage on them; which is exactly what the old Demiurge does to us all . . . going down Broadway a misty forenoon, trying to read the time on Trinity Church clock, thinking one must be even more shortsighted than one supposed —and eventually discovering that the hands of the clock had been taken off. . . . Always amused to see the *Birth Control Reviews* on sale at Broadway and 34th, just where a little more birth control would have been most useful. . . . The feeling of a place that has been lived in so long that it is well-worn, like a familiar garment . . . the occasional but very definite realization that women, on the average, are much wiser than men. . . . Woman is the immortal source of every truth . . . the regret for winter's weakening: nostalgia for those clear deep nights and the wind in the chimney. . . . There is always Walt Whitman to fall back on. . . .

While waiting for a train, idly I looked up a poet in the telephone directory. There he was: Endymion, John J., among that bewildering density of names (I could have called him) and nothing to suggest that his capacities and portents were any different from the others . . . scarlet slippers, dresses hanging up in cupboards, the shape of people's handwriting, manuscripts that were written out of ecstasy or misery now embalmed in bright leather slip-cases with gold lettering . . . learning how to make your own phone connection by the dial system . . . the face of a dog when he is let off his leash. . . . What is the Collector of Internal Revenue going to do about these things?

Sunlight getting stronger and buds on the lilac . . . reckoning that there is enough coal in the bin to see you through . . . the musical rasp of the shovel under a pile of coal . . . steam . . . sweeping things very clean with a broom . . . reading a book lent you by someone you love and thinking that his eyes also have traversed that same print, those same queer-shaped letters . . . the oddity of a familiar word if you look too long at it . . . the enormous oddity of Everything if you pause to consider it . . . lying flat on one's back (like Peter Ibbetson) to think; especially doing so with a cigarette, and an ash tray balanced on one's chest for convenience . . . falling asleep so and cleaning the couch of ashes and stubs thereafter . . . getting ready to go to bed with a really good detective story . . . the recent republication (by Methuen, in London) of Burnand's "Happy Thoughts," a joy to the secret camarilla brought up on that enchanting absurd comic old book; perhaps it is one of the two funniest books in the English language, the other being "The Wrong Box. . . ." "Happy Thoughts" is the perfect anatomy of a Simpleton; the only other book we know in its particular genre is "The Diary of a Nobody. . . ." The names of railroads written on cars . . . the photographs taken by Gifford Pinchot in the South Seas . . . accidental masterpieces discovered in daily papers—such as the quotation from a South American wit: "High heels were invented by a woman who had been kissed on the forehead. . . ." How do we make a report to the Collector of these important items in our budget?

The Faithful F. H. P. Tallies from Washington, D. C.

Yes, that was I, whistling and stamping in the back row at the end of your B and O travelogue. Here we have one of the few industrial public servants which give service without spelling the word with a capital S and then falling into a coma.

The descendants of Hamlet's father, the Interborough's million moles, ought to get out and see, first, what Manhattan Island really is—it isn't a Swiss cheese—, and second, by our pleasant railroad, the Blue Ridge and the Alleghanies. Of course, there's no rush; they'll be there a long time.

Nor, any more than to our homes, would we apply to our favorite railroad those superlatives of mediocrity—richest, fastest, longest, biggest—we like the B and O and so we don't have to.

"Red Wine and Blue Water"

A highly regarded client writes from London:

The appeal from the Messrs. Berry's worthy wineshop on St. James Street, which you printed recently, struck a responsive note in the breast of this American newspaperman in London. I wonder how many of the American delegates to the Naval Conference have tarried on their walks between St. James Palace and the Ritz Hotel to peer through the ancient Berry windows into the dim and dusty confines of that hallowed establishment? It is, you may recall, but a door or two from St. James Palace. You might be interested to learn, too, that Mr. Charles Walter Berry is the author of a delightful little volume, "Viniana," on a subject close to his heart, described as "a blend of good wines and good stories as told at table by a Wine Merchant and dedicated to all those who enjoy a glass of good wine." It was recently brought out here by Constable and I trust it will soon be discovered by one of our more discerning American publishers (if it has not been already).

Still on the subject of beverages, I should mention that I was recently a guest overnight aboard His Majesty's Ship, *Emperor of India*, flagship of the Third Battle Squadron, anchored at Portland after returning from a cruise to Spain, through the courtesy of Instructor Lieutenant-Commander C. R. Benstead. (Benstead is the author, by the way, of that fine war novel, "Retreat," which I hope will duplicate in America the success it has already had here). F, who had previously enjoyed Royal Naval hospitality aboard the same ship told me to insist on rum being brought in with my morning tea. It was unnecessary, however: all Americans are automatically served the celebrated British Navy fluid. Before taking my leave, Benstead presented me with a copy of a brochure issued by the firm of Saccone & Speed, Ltd., whose principal customer is the British Navy. It is called "Red Wine and Blue Water," subtitled aptly "A *Memento of a Naval Entente*," and would certainly do your heart good to see it. If you will bear with me longer, I will set down a bit of it here for your edification:

A Mathematical Excursion

"As already noted, the introduction of Dom, or any other liqueur, into a cocktail augments its alcoholic strength considerably, and this, in turn, raises once again the whole question of potency and the cumulative effect of alcohol, however assimilated. It is not proposed to thrash out the question in detail, because it has been done already by the Liquor Control Board, whose somewhat alarming handbook entitled *Report on Alcohol: Its Action on the Human Organism* is probably quite well known and digested. But there is another report, and because it deserves to be more widely disseminated than it is, a few words upon it will not come amiss here.

"This report was most wittily drawn up by a truly eclectic Committee of Service experts—and who should be more qualified than they?—who sat (the word is employed in its customary meaning where committees are concerned) a few years ago. Their investigations were long, arduous, and weakening, and they were conducted in a spirit of sacrifice, regardless of expense, which, it is ventured, has made them unique of their kind.

"By extending what they were pleased to term *Winestein's* Theory of Conviviality to the field of Metaphysics, the Committee were able to reduce all observed phenomena to simple mathematical equations and identities, and to say quite definitely that for the ordinary Rate of Loading adopted in Service Wardrooms, and for a Particular Individual of normal Bulk Modulus who has attended no previous Complimentary Function—for him, sooner or later:

(1) 'a' would become '2a', since all point sources of light resolved into two.
(2) the expression of (Sin A—Cos B) would certainly become (Sinh A—Cosh B), which is tantamount to saying that speech would become hyperbolic.

If, however, the Rate of Loading were allowed to become continuous, instead of remaining discreet, as heretofore, then the periodicity vanished, and the result was sublimation, due, of course, to the Natural Haverwine Function in the Operator.

"The Committee were able to show this clearly by means of a Psychic Equilibrium Diagram, thus enabling the student to pick out at a glance the various stages through which he is likely to pass if he should test himself to destruction. These, of course, vary according as his initial state ranges from complete dryness to unit saturation, and indicate that there are roughly two main divisions or experiences, separated at the point of Spasmodic Reversal, which may befall him."

There is no need for any further comment, from me or anyone else.

Thurston Macauley.

On June 5, 1930, O. Henry will have been dead twenty years. I have been wondering if there may not still be some unpublished letters or manuscripts of his that the Bowling Green might print to mark the anniversary. Won't Dr. Rosenbach or some other great Collector rummage round among his files?

The most pungent comment on Walt that I have encountered lately was a quotation from G. J. Nathan which I found in Louis Adamic's vigorous essay on Robinson Jeffers. "If Walt Whitman had owned an extra pair of pants he would have been a royalist."

A Fable for Publishers: A distinguished American poet told me that he used to feel dejected because his publishers (a very large firm) didn't pay much particular attention to him, didn't specialize on or headline his books. Then one day he sat down with their complete catalogue and did some figuring. He discovered that they had something like 15,000 titles in print; that they publish over 400 new books (including textbooks) every year; that they have about 2,500 living authors on their list. He multiplied all these figures together and divided by the number of working hours in the business calendar. "I came to the conclusion," he reports, "that my publisher only owes me 10 minutes of personal time twice a year. He gives me more than that; in fact he even blows me to lunch occasionally. This calculation of mine has smoothed out all savage egotisms and libidos in my breast; I am thoroughly gruntled, and I commend the thought to my brother authors."

Christopher Morley.

Eight Out of Nine

RETURN OF THE BRUTE. By Liam O'Flaherty. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by Bartlet Brebner

HERE is a long short-story of the war which is not open to the common charge that it uses the war as a vehicle for the author's spleen against society. It is a bit of war in nearly complete detachment. It treats of the lives of nine, and the deaths of eight, members of a bombing section during about twenty-four hours of outpost duty and advance. It is all far removed from strategy, tactics, and general staff. The command is in the person of a fairly stupid corporal. An officer, a sergeant, and another corporal come out of the void occasionally to contact with the squad, but fade out rapidly into the void again without integrating the little group in any purposeful military action. All is mud, rain, chaos, and ignorance, and in the welter of it a nine-man microcosm of British infantry disintegrates. One man was slowly drowned in a mud-hole while the others rescued the corporal; one was shot while digging in during an attack, another while obeying a physical necessity; one died bringing rations in spite of his mortal wounds; one died of fear and exhaustion; and one went mad, killed two others, and staggered into the bullets of the enemy.

Yet the tale is not mere reporting. For one thing it is not "slick" enough to be that. Mr. O'Flaherty in his less than usually successful opening seems to be in a transition from his old to a new mode of expression. At any rate, he is not glib.

Neither is he anarchic. His warriors succumb almost systematically in terms of their own personalities instead of, as is so common, in terms of a lottery, or the meaningless whims of either an apathetic or a malevolent Providence. A statistician might object that the group is not a "fair sample" in its percentage of killed, wounded, missing, and survivors, but perhaps that is the author's point. He presents the destruction of a remnant of the toughest, most tired, infantry soldiers—the bombers, in this case half military misfits and half experienced fighters. It is the oldest soldier who dies heroically in the performance of duty and the next oldest whose qualities place him in duties which enable him to survive.

There are a number of strands of meaning woven into the theme of this stark tale with varying success. They are not all continuous and there is no attempt to give them a dominant synthesis. Probably the imperative necessity of discipline to prevent disaster is longest lived, beginning with the corrosive influence of a youngster terrified to fearlessness of military reproof, working through the stages of decline as misery, fatigue, and ignorance break down even the habitual bullying of the corporal, and culminating in his murder by the man whose obvious madness he had tried to obliterate from the scheme of things by applying discipline to it. The survivor is left with his rifle pointed towards the enemy. The maddening burden of war even on the insensitive is another theme convincingly unfolded, and there are lesser strands derived from the behavior of the lesser characters. In all, however, the author does not presume to describe war as a whole by subjecting types to it, but rather demonstrates, as it were clinically, what one particular aspect of war is likely to do to one particular kind of group.

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BOOKS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Anthropoid Life

THE GREAT APES: A Study of Anthropoid Life. By ROBERT M. and ADA W. YERKES. New Haven: Yale University Press; 1929. $10.

Reviewed by CHARLES S. MYERS
British Institute of Industrial Psychology

THIS fascinating and encyclopedic presentation of the history and state of our knowledge of the anthropoid apes has been written by the Professor of Psycho-biology in Yale University and by his wife. Since 1924 there has existed at Yale University a Primate Laboratory properly equipped for the study of the divers problems in animal and social psychology for which the anthropoid apes can serve as subjects. Here the authors of this splendid volume have been working, and much of their unpublished work is, as we shall see, incorporated in it. But Professor Yerkes hopes to go further in the direction of establishing headquarter camps for observing anthropoid apes in their natural habitats, and sub-tropical breeding stations in America where problems of reproduction and other special research problems can be adequately studied.

The fate of the few colonies of apes which have been established for their scientific study has not hitherto been a singularly happy one. Two of them were abandoned in 1918,—one being the German Station at Teneriffe in the Canaries, where Professor W. Köhler made such illuminating observations on the Chimpanzee, and the other that established by G. V. Hamilton at Santa Barbara, California, where, in 1916, Professor Yerkes carried out his pioneer investigations into the comparative adaptability of monkeys and orang-outans.

And yet, as the writers of this volume contend, what next to the study of man can be more important than the study of the anthropoid apes? Structurally, functionally, and from the standpoint of consciousness, they stand far closer to man than do such domesticated animals as the dog or cat. They can admirably serve as substitutes in investigations which it is impossible to carry out on man, owing to the dictates of public opinion or legislation, risks to health, etc. These investigations relate to genetics, sociology, education, physiology, neuro- and psycho-pathology, and other fields of study. What better opportunities can be conceived for carrying them out than those offered by properly equipped laboratories, observation stations, and experimental breeding stations for the study of the anthropoid apes?

There are plenty of chimpanzees still existing and they enjoy a very wide geographical distribution. But the orang-outan was formerly far more numerous, and the number of gorillas, the so-called kings of the anthropoid ape, amounts now probably only to a few thousand "souls"! Most abundant are the gibbons, but the authors prefer to exclude both gibbons and siamangs (the Hylobatidæ) from the anthropoid apes, being convinced of their closer relation to the monkeys, both structurally and psychologically.

Our knowledge of the anthropoid apes has become far more precise during the past thirty years. Previously one was too often dependent on the tales of travelers (hunters, naturalists, etc.) and on tradition,—both often unreliable and unverifiable. Up to the beginning of the last century the chimpanzee and orang-outan were confused, although each had been clearly described in the seventeenth century. And it was only about the middle of the last century that the gorilla was definitely distinguished from the chimpanzee, even that distinction being subsequently confused by the rare appearance of puzzling intermediate forms.

It is the history of this growth of our knowledge which the writers of the magnificent volume now under review present to us. The material was originally gathered to help them in their own investigations, and is here generously given by them to the world to serve as an authoritative statement to laymen and to save future workers the hours lost to research which the accumulation of this knowledge of past work has cost the authors. Begun as a purely objective historical account of our knowledge of the life of the anthropoid apes, their work has developed in the chapters devoted to the orang-outan so as to include personal criticism and constructive observation. Their knowledge of the chimpanzee, as they justly remark, is only equalled by Köhler's, and most of their research work on this ape has not hitherto been published. They too alone possess intimate knowledge of the gorilla. Hence it is not surprising that the book has gradually and irresistibly developed so as to present detailed accounts of their own unique psychological experiments and observations. The following quotations will serve to illustrate this fact and the intense interest of the whole book.

> Without further illustration we would state from analysis of pertinent observations in the literature, and from our own unpublished data, that the chimpanzee commonly exhibits trial and error as adaptational method. Many problems are solved, or, better, many adaptations are achieved, solely on the basis of this procedure. But there are times when blind trial gradually gives place to insight and in the end the solution seems to involve thorough perceptual grasp of the essential features of the problematical situation and a measure of insight which, had it originally appeared, would have obviated mistakes. Our experience indicates that it is difficult to predict whether a given method will evoke blind trail or insight. Conditions may be unfavorable for the one or the other, and a situation may initially or in the course of re-presentations evoke both types of adaptation.
>
> The mountain gorilla ("Congo") made me suspect a development of craft and cunning far beyond anything I had previously noted in other anthropoid apes. And although it would be inappropriate on the basis of my present scant knowledge to discuss the matter at length, I have also the suspicion that her degree of penetration and practical understanding of her environment and of the transformations in it for which I was responsible, far exceeded that made apparent by my description of experiments. Much of the time she made me feel that she was concealing rather than revealing her insights.

The book contains also many extracts and illustrations of the experiments and apparatus of others, numerous pictures of anthropoid apes, their habitats, and the experimental stations founded for their study. In it twenty-five pages are devoted to a bibliography of books and articles down to the year 1928, and ten pages to tabular comparison of the structures and functions, physical and mental, of the anthropoid apes.

The whole work is admirably done, with characteristic accuracy and cautiousness of statement. It is hard to find a misprint in these 670 pages. And when naturally we seek to ascertain from the authors which of the greater apes is nearest, mentally, to man we meet with such careful weighing of the "pros" and "cons" as to realize the authors' urgent demand for more and more research, and the justification for their final word of command—"Forward march!"

A Vehement Spirit

FRANCES NEWMAN'S LETTERS. Edited by HANSELL BAUGH. New York: Horace Liveright. 1929. $3.

Reviewed by HERSCHEL BRICKELL

IT is inevitable in writing of the brief but spectacular career of Frances Newman that one should use the words meteoric or rocket-like. The sudden flashing into the literary skies of a librarian at a Southern college with so dazzlingly brilliant, even if fundamentally specious, a book as "The Short Story's Mutations" was something not many of this generation are likely to forget. Amid the pæans of praise for this début, one critic of consequence stood alone in condemning the book as unworthy; there is something deeply significant in the fact that Miss Newman admitted sometime afterward his was the only good opinion she really wanted. Thus her career began with a disappointment. It closed with disappointment, for her death came not very long after the publication of a second novel that was not even good in the mannered way of its predecessor. Miss Newman, as her letters make clearly evident, set out deliberately to become a literary figure, and not at all content to wait for Fame to bring its laurels quietly to her study door, gave the goddess every assistance possible in finding her.

What she might have accomplished if she had lived longer remains a mystery beyond even the penetration of Mr. James Branch Cabell, who has provided a glowing preface for the Letters, although Mr. Cabell is certain enough that Miss Newman would have emerged in time as preëminently the great woman writer of America. I am not sure she was not too clever for great work, not too much concerned with getting on by playing the game rather than by honest effort. How much she really had to say can hardly be got at, from the three books she left behind her. As a critic, she preferred to slaughter a book rather than to try to evaluate it; it is not easy to forget her savage attack upon Willa Cather's "Death Comes for the Archbishop," or her even more virulent review of Eleanor Carroll Chilton's "Shadows Waiting." Rightly or wrongly, she made one suspect personal venom in many of her reviews; she was a very personal sort of person, almost too much so, in fact, to be a real artist.

Most of the evidence of what she was really like is to be found in the "Letters," which have been edited and arranged with admirable taste and discrimination by one of the persons who really knew her; there were very few who did. Her letters are to and from many people, members of her own family, Cabell, Mencken, reviewers for whom in general she had a profound contempt; her good friends such as Mr. Baugh and Mr. Lamar Trotti. These letters are fascinating, and I would no more have missed reading them than I would deliberately forget having known Frances Newman. She was never for a second a commonplace person; she had a striking mind, brilliant and hard, and often a little alarming. She had the excellent manners of a wellbred Southerner, she was sophisticated, and perhaps she was more than a little afraid that life would not give her the recognition she craved quickly enough, which may explain many things about her life.

A Paradoxical Career

CHARLOTTE BRONTË. A Psychological Study. By ROSAMUND LANGBRIDGE. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1929. $2.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK MILNER

AS a protest against the St. Charlotte legend of Mrs. Gaskell, Miss Langbridge's book has its uses. There is no doubt that amongst the more intelligent Brontë enthusiasts the "stainless womanhood" notion of Charlotte Brontë is recognized at its true value, for Charlotte could be not only shockingly un-Victorian, but downright unmaidenly. But there are still too many pilgrims at Haworth—and I write within sight of Haworth Moor—who are sentimentally fascinated by the sight of the very cup out of which Charlotte drank her afternoon tea, and slippers in which she rested before the drawing-room fire, whilst the moorland wind howled outside. The Brontë Society itself, alas, by its passion for the most trifling and irrelevant relics, seems to encourage the cult and it is really high time that the romantic nonsense came to an end. Charlotte should be saved from her idolatrous friends with whom she herself would have dealt in a most salutary manner.

But whether Miss Langbridge will command the whole-hearted agreement of her readers when she brings forward her psychological interpretation is rather another matter. Her style itself prejudices one against her to start with. She is too impatient, too indignant, and her pages are marred by too many exclamation marks. Such chapter titles as "The Truth about Charlotte Brontë's Marriage" smack too much of *chroniques scandaleuses*. The style, also, is symbolic of Miss Langbridge's attitude towards the data with which she is confronted. Her theme is that Charlotte suffered from "A Suppressed Personality." Charlotte had been born witty, independent, and gay, but was cramped throughout the whole of her life. What is still more important, Charlotte was by nature a rebel who never once rebelled—that is Miss Langbridge's essential point—and the result was timidity, vacillation, indecision, and the ruin of her nervous system. The Rev. Patrick Brontë might find "expression" by stuffing lighted hearth-rugs up the chimney, by sawing Mrs. Brontë's drawing-room chairs in two, or by firing his blunderbuss under her window, but Charlotte had no outlet for her energy.

It is not difficult for Miss Langbridge to find evidence which, at first sight, gives color to her contention, but she writes with the eloquence of a lawyer. She gives a series of antitheses. Charlotte loved beautiful scenes and lived in the smoke of the industrial North. She loved sparkling talk which was simply not to be had in uncultured Haworth, with the family ogres, cancer and consumption, ever in the background. She loved the society of famous men and had to be content with beadles, sextons, and churchwardens, not to mention the ubiquitous Mothers' Meetings. She loved liberty but had to spend some of her life as a despised and abused governess. She loved intellectual honesty and had to live in the atmosphere of cant and humbug in an almost Calvinistic parsonage. Finally, she ached for romantic love, but her father was too jealous to allow suitors; her affair with M. Héger broke her heart, and she had to settle down, though for a tragically short time, with the placid and undistinguished Arthur Nicholls. All this—and several other minor factors which Miss Langbridge stresses—imposed upon Charlotte Brontë that very up-to-date affliction, an inhibited character.

One can agree entirely, of course, that Charlotte's was by no means an easy life and that the narrowness of her attitude towards Roman Catholicism and such persons as Harriet Martineau, Matthew A and Cardinal Wiseman was the result environment and experiences. Her und love for M. Héger, whether it was ically sexual as well as spiritual or no, had also a permanent effect upon her personality. But in labelling Charlotte Brontë as an example of "suppressed personality" Miss Langbridge makes two errors. She simplifies excessively and does not go through the preliminary process of classifying the data which, as William James rightly said, was of supreme importance. It is the common mistake of all pioneers in any subject from the scientific thinkers of Miletus to Freud. Moreover, Miss Langbridge does not practise historical-mindedness. Her own modern exasperation with Victorianism causes her to read all her own emotions into Charlotte Brontë in a most unhistorical manner. No matter how Charlotte may have shocked her contemporaries, no matter how un-Victorian she was in many ways, she was nevertheless extremely Victorian in essentials and by no means Georgian.

Miss Langbridge is so preoccupied with her idea of suppression that she misses the main factor—that it was the life of Charlotte Brontë, with all its sadness and bitter disappointment, which made her art possible. Charlotte may have been thwarted, but she was not crushed, and in her writing she found very considerable scope for self-expression, although Miss Langbridge does not think so. It is the fierceness of Charlotte Brontë's novels which gives to them the fire of genius. The hardness of life was the stuff out of which she made her name and fame. Had she enjoyed a happy and comfortable life, she might never have become a great writer. Her energy would have been absorbed by the business of living. She would have gained in happiness and in breadth of outlook, and she would have been more "cultured," but she would have lost her intensity, and without that she would very probably have been of very little importance. She would have been more gentle and more sympathetic in her judgments, but her intellectual vitality would not have developed. Disappointment was the price she had to pay.

Although Miss Langbridge's iconoclasm is timely, her interpretation is thus hardly satisfactory. She finds what she is looking for, but her book is a personal impression rather than an objective study. There are more complicated factors in Charlotte Brontë's make-up than are dreamt of in Miss Langbridge's narrow psychology.

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Byron: Man and Poet

FOR some years I cherished an ambition to write Byron's life, and with that hope read many books about him, took many notes, and smoked many enchanted cigarettes. There was, then, only one good modern biography of Byron in existence, Miss Colburne Mayne's. Miss Mayne wrote after Lord Lovelace's "Astarte" had appeared and she therefore had the key to the "Augusta" chamber in Byron's life which had been closed to previous biographers, though old controversies had fumbled at the lock. She also had the great Murray edition of Byron's Letters and Works in her hands. Besides being the most thoroughly informed biography up to its date hers had also other merits; it was the work of a sensitive and acute judge of human nature and of a biographer fascinated, but not dominated, by Byron's personality.

M. Maurois's long-expected "Life of Byron,"* exceeds expectations; it is the most thorough piece of work he has done. He possesses Miss Mayne's qualifications, and in addition, as the world knows, has a very rare talent for narrative. In short, his book must fill with envy anyone who has worked over the same ground as himself and fascinate those to whom that ground is unfamiliar. The texture of the narrative is at once close-packed and smooth; for the general reader it flows like a novel, yet the knowledge behind every statement, almost behind every adjective, is obvious to the enlightened. In the case of most famous men a lack of intimate facts is the biographer's difficulty, in Byron's it is an excess of them. Byron's thoughts, emotions, action, day by day, lie open to us. When the Great Book is read out in the Valley of Jehosophat there will be few surprises for us under the entry "Byron"; in his case the Day of Judgment has been anticipated. It is then the business of Byron's biographer to guide us through revealing anecdotes and records, and the path he chooses will depend upon the kind of guide he is. Here our guide is an indulgent man of the world and a gifted man of letters. It is not Byron the poet, or Byron the liberator, who interests M. Maurois most but the Byron who engages our attention when we sit down to discuss human nature as coolly and cleverly as we can. The first thing we do on such occasions in the case of a famous man is to ignore his "legend." We want to get behind it.

Every great man has his legend, which is the result of the impact of his personality on a receptivity peculiar to his times. There are, of course, always differences, sometimes very interesting differences, between a man and his legend. When that receptivity changes the legend becomes suspect, and those researches after what is called the "real man" begin to be made. It is tempting when this process starts to exaggerate the contrast between his stature in private life and the enormous shadow which once he threw across the world, a temptation also freely indulged by contemporary gossips. It was by Byron's contemporaries. No poet was ever more famous in his life-time than Byron, and the distinctive note of that fame was that it was accompanied by intense interest in his personality and behavior. These reports of contemporary gossips have made it easy to study in Byron's case the relation between legend and man, and that study has been made easier still by Byron's own excessive communicativeness and his habit of hoarding every scrap of evidence relating to himself. Wherever he moved he carried with him beside the picturesque impedimenta so often described, many trunks and boxes containing his past. Everything to do with himself appeared to him of vital importance, and he could not part with the smallest chip or particle of his life. This kind of egotism may make contemporaries mock, but it makes friends among posterity.

It is most unfair, but it is true, that posthumous fame is more easily won by those to whom everything connected with themselves has seemed of extraordinary importance. And this was one of Byron's most marked traits. Hence the material, nearly all of it intensely interesting, at the disposal of his biographers is so large that their task is no longer to guess at the unrevealed, but to arrange revelations in the best perspective. It is by its perspective that a new life of Byron must be judged. One of the tests is that it should not make the man himself seem too petty to have played so great a part; for after all a man's legend and his work are essential parts of himself. Indeed, there is something to be said for the view that the essence of a famous man is, after all, most accurately understood in an adjective formed from his name,—Shakespearean, Horatian, Dantesque, Byronic.

What happens in our imagination when we utter the word Byronic? If you are one who thinks in pictures that word will call up first the image of a figure balefully impressive, wrapped in a cloak, against a background of storm or mountain grandeur. His attitude is suggestive of defiance and despair, his hair and neck-tie ruffled in the wind, are symbolic of the passions sweeping through his soul. He is alone; men and women are such pigmies compared with him that their love cannot comfort nor their hate disturb him. His noble birth is a symbol of aristocracy of soul. His superiority at once repels and attracts, "and where he looks a gloom pervades the air." He is a rebel against all restraint. He could be the most brilliant of companions, the most inspiring of leaders, the most passionate of lovers, but either some mysterious doom is upon him, or having tasted all life can offer he has found it to be short, common, and empty.

> His is a lofty spirit, turn'd aside
> From its bright path by woes, and wrongs, and pride;
> And onward in its new, tumultuous course,
> Borne with too rapid and intense a force
> To pause one moment in the dread career,
> And ask—if such could be its native sphere?

Such a figure might be impressive if the nature of things permitted any human being to stand in such a posture long—and if he were not so obviously conscious of spectators.

There are two things to note about this Byronic personage—that it has affinities with a common type of day dream, and with other literary types which preceded it. Byron did not invent the melancholy impressive man, any more than Shakespeare invented the Hamlet type. He is a popular phantom who has appeared in literature from time to time. When Shakespeare wrote "Hamlet" in 1601 the "melancholy type" was a fashionable figure. Jacques in "As You Like It" who styles himself a melancholy man is a mocking sketch of him.

The melancholy man crops up again in the mid-eighteenth century, with his appropriate background of tombs, moonlight, and yews, in the works of the poet Young, whose European fame was hardly less than among his countrymen, and planted in France the *goût du sombre* which prepared the way for Châteaubriand. Scott at once discovered when reviewing Byron's poems a resemblance between the Byronic heroes and those of Mrs. Radcliffe—and not in malice. But while the lady novelist imagined figures who would thrill her if she met them, the poet found in similar heroes something near enough to himself to make them living masks to express his own turbulence and distress. The public instantly felt that these familiar and adorable puppets had been filled with a new, prodigious vigor and life. The conclusion was as irresistible as it was thrilling: only a Corsair could have written "The Corsair"; only a Lara that dark and awful poem; only a Childe Harold that "Pilgrimage"; only a damned soul "Manfred." But those who met the author in the flesh, saw a very different figure, and we who now read Byron's letters in M. Maurois's book have the same experience.

A small man, certainly of exceptionally beautiful and expressive countenance, pale with that attractive opaque pallor which often goes with red hair (Yes, only repeated application of Macassar oil had reduced those romantic curls to a tolerable mahogany), who approached you, not with a very noticeable limp (unless you met him at a time when he had given up for a while the struggle with his fat and weighed fourteen stone), but with a curious undulating gait —dandling and tiptoeing towards you; who addressed you in a low, distinct voice, the tone of which, though discontented, was very pleasant. You would certainly notice his eyes, "open portals of the sun, things of light and for light," and his smile, not so pleasant, with too much contempt in the corners of it. His manner would show either a lack of assurance, or an inconsiderate self-confidence; both effects of a real uneasiness as to how he was striking you.

It would be a hundred to one that he would hail you first as a fellow-man of the world; partly because he is very shy, and while not knowing exactly what you expect from a poet, he resents disappointing you, and partly because on that footing, as a dandy and peer of the realm, the pull he thinks will be in his favor. For he is always afraid that other people are not giving him his due, or noticing with amusement that he is far from resembling a Corsair, or looking at his shrunken foot, or listening to his slight Scotch accent, or, worst of all,—noticing his need of sympathy. He would far rather give you a completely misleading impression of himself than let you see that; and yet he would never really like you if you were not secretly aware of it. He is quite a different man when others are present to when he is alone with you; and if some members of the company belong to different worlds he is apt to be intolerably affected, for his acute self-consciousness then makes him aware of being judged from different points of view. He is liable to sudden fits of sulks and apt to throw about him furious scowls for no apparent reason; something somebody has said has flicked him on a raw place and his soul is covered with old, but still tender, bruises. The only thing to do is to take no notice, even if he has turned on you with a savage remark. His resentment is, however, extremely brief, for he has a most active mind and something else soon interests him.

Now imagine that you have got to know him better. Get him alone, he is above all tremendous fun, and if he is sure that you are not a competitor or a toady, he might strike you as the most natural man you had ever met—for he hides none of his moods and says straight out whatever thought comes into his head and there is a smiting directness in his speech which makes everything he says memorable. But if you have a cringe in you, he will kick you to see how many kicks you will stand, and if you are a competitor he will try to humiliate or outbrag you. And if you are a competitor in masculine achievements, then, like Trelawney, you are likely to see the worst side of him, for though his intellect is extremely virile, his temperament and body are the reverse. His courage, too (he is both mistrustful and inordinately proud of it), is of the feminine, wild-cat kind without circumspection. It is a blind dash at an obstacle or a flight straight in the face of danger, and shot with all sorts of timidities and misgivings. The men whom he really envies are those steely hard livers, gamblers, fighters, the Brummell dandies. The strong streak of femininity in him enables him to get on with women very quickly, but prevents him from finding in them for long any supporting complement to his own nature. They have no mystery for him. When his intellect is not working their company is hardly a change from his own. They soon bore him.

The most stable relation he knows is with a solid block of a man, like Hobhouse, one to whom his whims and impulsiveness endear him. In that relation Byron's superiority in many respects is so overwhelming that he can allow himself to be humored and steered without feeling that he is patronized. That is a comfort to him, but that is not what he wants. It is only after all "a man of the world" friendship, a tough, common, serviceable relation, unlit by those tremors of devotion he remembers in his boyhood friendships and in the early stages of love-affairs. Still, he feels such a friendship to be about as good a thing as you can get in this disappointing world. He enjoys shocking you if he can, but you must be only troubled (like Shelley) by his cynicism, never disgusted or contemptuous: that he will not forgive. He loves to giggle and to make giggle, and he is seldom sad when he is with anyone he likes, though often profoundly melancholy when alone. His sense of fun is apt to be cruel, for he has suffered so acutely from humiliations, that nothing sends his spirits up so much as catching other

* BYRON. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1930. $5.

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by Desmond MacCarthy

people in unbecoming attitudes; knowing that he himself is always saying unkind things about people whom he likes, he supposes that they do the same about him behind his back, and feels furious at the mere possibility. He is apt to greet any show of fidelity or affection with a sarcastic grin, though it is what he wants. He is not loyal, yet he never forgets anyone. Indeed, he is apt to remember those to whom he has behaved particularly badly with a peculiar yearning, which convinces him that his heart is misunderstood, and makes him feel more resentful at another time against them, as towards Lady Byron for example.

To behave downright caddishly gives him at moments a peculiar satisfaction; then he feels he is at least in honesty superior to others. The one thing that infallibly makes him behave badly is the sense of being under an obligation. He can be extremely generous to anyone who has no claim on him, but if he scents a claim he can be capable of great harshness—(as he showed in the case of poor Leigh Hunt, who unfortunately had a snobbish propitiatory cringe in him, and of the Shelleys when they asked him to contradict a slander of Mary Shelley over money matters after Shelley's death). It was the same in his love affairs. The moment Caroline Lamb claimed him, his impulse to smash their relation and have done with it became overwhelmingly strong. It was the implication in Claire Clairmont's behaviour, that she had a claim and a grievance, which made him behave roughly to her; though for a frankly selfish man in his conduct over Allegra he showed some patience. From Claire's early letters it is clear that he was never the pursuer.

Indeed, the story of the amorous side of Byron's life reminds us sometimes less of Don Juan than of Orpheus among the furies. He had little resemblance to the Don Juan type. The only time he appears in the rôle of seducer is in the letters to Lady Melbourne about Lady Frances Wedderburn. He had been reading "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," and in writing to another woman enjoyed fancying himself like the hero. His actual behavior was unlike, for after making his captive's heart flutter a little he let her go. He said of himself that in love the smallest obstacle or rebuff checked him, and as he was fond of boasting of his ruthlessness and success, it was probably true. His conquest of his half-sister Augusta Leigh, whom he hardly met before they were both grown up, seems to have been easy. She could always do what she liked, because when she liked she could forget what she was doing or had done. It made her amiable, but often exasperating.

The impatience with anyone who had a claim upon him, which made him, of course, an odious husband, is one of the links between the Byron we know through his life and letters and a third Byron, whose image the mention of his name may also call up—the political Byron. Even a small interference with his liberty would throw him into a passion out of all proportion to the inconvenience involved. This exasperated intolerance of control lay at the root of his political enthusiasm for liberty in general. The political Byron belongs to that type of disgruntled aristocrat who has so often helped on the early stages of revolution while loathing the results of it, and whose sympathy with the oppressed turns to contempt the moment they get anything they want.

How were the "real" and the legendary Byron connected? M. Maurois shows how a Calvinistic upbringing, the story of his own wild ancestry, his deformity, and his own childish inexplicable furies, implanted from the first in Byron a strange foreboding that he was born wicked and under a curse. He shows how unlucky circumstances repeatedly encouraged in him his sense of unjust fatality. He shows how this resentment and consciousness of sin were intensified by his own actions, until anything painful that ocurred to him, even when it concerned others far more than himself, became a mere episode in "a long war waged between Destiny and George Gordon Byron." Hence those lurid embodiments of defiance and despair: Harold, Lara, Manfred, Cain. He shows how the clear-headed realist in Byron at last freed him from those obsessions, but how finding still only half of himself expressed in the gayly-despairing, mocking philosophy of "Don Juan," he turned, as he had always longed to do, towards action.

M. Maurois shows these things, just as he brings out again and again Byron's dawdling indecision, habit-ridden inertness, and acute self-consciousness, characteristics which disabled him as a man of action, not by pointing at them like a lecturer, but by allowing the story itself to carry them home to us. There he shows his remarkable skill as a biographer. The other characters in the story are admirably indicated, and so are Byron's relations to them and their relations to Byron. I have but one general criticism to make. Like all other biographers of Byron, M. Maurois does not quite face the fact that he is writing the life of a man who, though most fascinating and exhilarating, was after all a bad man. With M. Maurois's indulgent attitude towards the incest episode (the two met as strangers on a footing of complete intimacy) I sympathize, but Byron had what is rare in human nature, a strain of downright wickedness in him; a black, uncontrollable impulse towards cruelty and at moments a bottomless falsity towards himself and others. He knew it. I believe that an immediate consciousness of this contributed more to those moods of defiant recklessness and terrified apprehension that he was fatal to all he loved, than his lame foot, his Calvinistic nurse, and his violent mother. That is where I differ from M. Maurois, whose book has given me the sensation of living in Byron's life, seeing things as he saw them, seeing him as others did; and in addition that pleasure, which as soon as you can pull yourself out of the stream of the story awaits you, of following a piece of work thoroughly well done.

Byron impinged during his life time as no literary man before or after him on the imagination of the world, and so big a dent is not to be made by excellence alone, any more than it can be made without it. His works, good and bad, dilated the emotional life of average men; intensified, rather than refined and elevated it. It was his glorious, comprehensive worldliness, so rare not to say anomalous in a poet, that made his appeal universal. He was interested in the morning paper from beginning to end. Current events, facts of history, things he had seen with his own eyes moved and excited him more than beauty or the thoughts which visit a contemplative mind; though to such things, too, like the average man he was not insensible, and sometimes he could express them. He seized upon the most easy and direct associations of whatever excited him; a ruin would remind him of the lapse of time and the brevity of life, moonlight of making love, the sea or a mountain of the littleness of man. All could feel as he had felt standing in the Colosseum; and, like normal man, he was never long detached from himself or from whatever touched him personally and nearly.

Great minds are more detached. Average men can attain at moments to where they stand, but they cannot keep up there. Here was a poet who never forgot himself for long. Thrill as he did to nature and the destiny of man and of nations, he made no secret of the fact that what he felt most acutely was all that concerned himself; his disappointments, his successes, sorrows, and what people thought of him. One touch of egotism makes the whole world kin, and Byron had, Heaven knows, more than a touch. Everyone likes drawing attention to himself and expressing himself; Byron was as shameless in this respect as everyone would fain be—and then he *was* interesting. Above all he was reckless and fearless.

How exhilarating to watch such a man! He had twinges of acute uneasiness about what the world thought of him and often felt shivers of fear; nevertheless he was born to blurt out whatever was uppermost in his thoughts and feelings. He could not help it; the consequences tortured him, but he could not stop. It was not moral courage but something more instinctive; something in its effect upon conduct more reliable than courage. It was an impulse as spontaneous and irresistible as the reflex start of a man when a pin is run into his leg. Byron was one of the least reliable and consistent of men, but he could be trusted to react instantly and spontaneously and to speak out of whatever mood or feeling was dominant in him—instantly; as surely as a cock to crow in the morning, or a lion to roar when hungry,—however good the reasons might be for holding his tongue, or modifying the violence of his words. Swinburne (and all critics admit he hit a nail on the head) praised Byron for his "sincerity and strength."

There are two kinds of sincerity in literature, that of the man who writes only what he steadily believes, and that which makes him speak out of himself what he happens to feel at the moment. Byron wrote straight from any mood which possessed him. Hence the smiting directness of his speech. If his impulse was to pose, his pose was as frank and preposterous as the daydreams of solitary vanity, and so transparent that his pose took on an interest of a deeper kind for those not dazzled by its theatricality. If his mood was a reaction against the heroic and romantic, and the pretensions of man's self-esteem, his disillusioned laughter shrivelled them up. What the deepest trend of his emotions was he could not have said. But he could tell the world what he thought and felt from time to time about sanctimonious people who thought they were the pets of a highly respectable Anglican First Cause, his friends, those who had hurt him, his loves, his wife, himself, poets, prigs, pedants, patriots, soldiers, fame, society, causes, war, parliaments, kings—indeed everything under the sun. On some of these topics his reactions were stable or at any rate constantly recurrent, but on others, his wife, himself, society, religion for example, they shifted east, west, north, and south.

What a relief in an age of muffled opinions and timid loyalties to have someone perpetually blowing the gaff like that! It is a boon for that matter to any age. Therefore Byron still lives. And then the transparent man remains in himself inexhaustibly interesting. He is so partly because we can all recognize bits of ourselves in him, partly because he is so much more fascinatingly bewildering than t
façades which is all that others usually show us

There Byron stands: a man with the merest r
icum of revolutionary sympathy that could prevent anyone being classified as a defender of privilege, who yet stimulated in thousands, whom he would have derided or detested, the sentiment of revolt; crooked yet spontaneous as a boy; a pourer-forth of excited fustian and over-colored rhetoric, yet achieving sometimes poetry of classic solidity and truth; a dandy who ever kept a self-conscious eye cocked on the looking-glass of the world, and yet a man impatient of his own poses; one who found them wearisome and exasperating, yet felt that not to put form and flourish into behavior was to make life detestably flat; one whose impulse was to strip to the point of indecency and stand in the buff, yet was furious with anyone who was not duly impressed at the sight; who told more people on no provocation at all about his most private affairs, yet resented gossip about himself; who snatched an added zest from the fact that anything he did was downright wicked, and yet suffered tortures of remorse; whose ideal was a lofty pride, but who never could resist making fools gape; who was unusually devoted to his friends, yet abused them even to people he disliked or despised; who lived in the present, yet clung to every scrap of the past with passionate adhesiveness—a bundle of contradictions, yet a comprehensible man. No one alive with him could take his eyes off him, and neither can we. And last contrast of all, to come close up to him (the records of his life are the fullest we possess of any man's), is to be impressed by the meanness of human nature and the triviality of emotions, to catch "the spleen" as Lamb said, and yet to be exhilarated by a sense of the beauty and courage of life, its perennial amusingness and its tragedy.

Desmond MacCarthy, author of the foregoing article, is one of the foremost living authorities on Byron. Maurois, in the introduction to his biography of the poet, refers to Mr. MacCarthy's projected life of Byron and to his special fitness for that work. He is the Editor of "Life and Letters," *a monthly periodical, the author of "The Court Theatre," and the editor of "Memoirs of Lady John Russell," as well as the translator of Jules Romains's "Mort de Quelqu'un."*

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Some Current Plays

THE CRIMINAL CODE. By MARTIN FLAVIN. New York: Horace Liveright. 1929. $2.

BERKELEY SQUARE. By JOHN L. BALDERSTON. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1929. $2.

BITTER SWEET, AND OTHER PLAYS. By NOEL COWARD. With a Few Comments on the Younger Dramatists. By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1929.

THE FIRST MRS. FRASER. By ST. JOHN ERVINE. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1930. $1.25.

STRICTLY DISHONORABLE. By PRESTON STURGES. New York: Horace Liveright. 1929. $2.

Reviewed by ROSAMOND GILDER

THE theatre, so we are told, is deliquescent. Never has theatrical business been in such bad shape as in this year of despair. Empty theatres, disappointing plays, poor direction, recalcitrant audiences—the wail of misery goes up from both sides of the footlights and reverberates through green-room and box office, but these five plays taken from recent publishers' lists as representing a fair cross section of Broadway to-day prove more cheering than might be expected and show that after all there are some bright spots in the prevailing gloom. A season that can produce a "Criminal Code" need not entirely despair, while lighter moods can be nourished with the dream stuff of "Berkeley Square," with the romantic graces of "Bitter Sweet," the ease and sparkle of "The First Mrs. Fraser," and the merry absurdities of "Strictly Dishonorable." A week in New York could not be spent to better advantage than in seeing these plays one after the other, but for those whose time and budget do not permit of such indulgence, the price of two good orchestra seats at any one of them could be well invested in the printed version of all five.

Nothing could more strikingly illustrate the force and value of the dramatic formula as against other methods of narrative than a reading of Martin Flavin's "Criminal Code." At this moment, when prison riots have uncovered some of the horrors latent in our penal system, when reports and investigations fill the newspapers with confused accounts of prison affairs and make even the smuggest among us stop for a moment to ponder the fate of those caught in its machinery, Mr. Flavin's play strikes home. In thirteen scenes stripped to the bare bones of action and dialogue, moving, swift, and convincing, "Criminal Code" presents in an hour's reading—in two and a half hours' acting time—an unforgetable picture of certain phases of the human problem involved. The playright can strike blow on blow without a moment's loss of time in description or explanation. He goes at once to the point. His setting is granted him by the reader's imagination, stimulated, in this particular instance, by the sketches of Albert R. Johnson's remarkably effective settings. His characters spring to life in proportion to his skill in dialogue. Past, present, and future are outlined in a few sharp words. "Criminal Code" is based, both in action and dialogue, on significant concentrations, that make on the printed page as in the theatre for speed and force. From the prologue, where we see that in spite of his human sympathy for the boy, the district attorney will send him up for ten years in order to pad his own record of convictions, to the moment when Bob, twice unjustly accused of murder, finally kills in sheer desperation, the play takes us with relentless steps through prison life and the two overlapping codes that dominate it—the codes, equally criminal, one made by the lawmakers and the other by the lawbreakers. Mr. Flavin's stagecraft, as it concerns his men, moving in a man-made hell, is magnificent; only when he interjects a woman, catering to the traditional superstition that no play will go without love-interest, does he bare the machinery of his plot-making. With this exception, the play has an irresistible force, building from scene to scene to a taut level of intensity, leaving the reader convinced, as no tract or sermon could, of the truth of Graham's cry in his last bitter agony of spirit—"No one has the right to make another human being suffer as I did. . . ."

Leaving Mr. Flavin's prison wall, his harsh prison talk, his broken scenes, and continuous action, for the leisurely charms of a drawing room in Berkeley Square is one of those refreshing excursions into the unexpected with which the theatre, even on the printed page, can provide us. In this play Mr. Balderston leads us away from the obvious realities. His hero demands and achieves a freedom which allows him to walk in his own body through a world long dead. In striking contrast to "Criminal Code," the theatrical illusion of truth is in this play used to convince us of that which is actually imposible, though imaginatively stimulating and seductive. Mr. Balderston's play runs outwardly along conventional lines: three acts set in a single room, pleasant dialogue, the usual young men and women in love, but his experiments in the simultaneity of time throw the action of the play into a world of wonderland as bewitching as any to which Alice penetrated through the looking glass.

Mr. Balderston's hero, Peter Standish, having meditated on the nature and substance of time to the imminent addlement of his brain, has formulated the conception that if an individual knew the trick, he could walk into that world of past events the emanations of which are still vibrating somewhere in space. Peter's studies are stimulated by his passion for eighteenth-century London and for the house on Berkeley Square which he, a twentieth-century American, descendant of the original owners, has inherited from a distant English cousin. Peter succeeds in his mad enterprise. He, in his own person, goes back to the Berkeley Square house in 1784. He finds, however, not the beauty and elegance, the wit and charm, he had fondly imagined, but "a filthy little pig-sty of a world," which would have driven him back to his own century in short order had it not been for the magic of Helen—Helen who did not marry the Peter Standish in whose shape his descendant is masquerading—Helen, whose eyes pierce his mystery, and who becomes across all the years that separate him his true and eternal Love. The strange mixture of romance and reality which Mr. Balderston conjures up in his Berkeley Square drawing room is almost as delightful in print as on the stage, though certain lapses are perhaps more evident in the written text.

"Berkeley Square," for all its English setting and the two hundred nights of successful performance in London which preceded its New York production, is the work of an American playwright. Our next two plays are English in authorship as well as in plot and setting. Noel Coward's "Bitter Sweet" is the most airily romantic and glamorous of this season's musical shows. Mr. Coward calls it an "operette" on his play bill to warn away those who go to the Ziegfeld Theatre in search of leg-shows and comics, and to encourage the army of those who want something to please the eye and the ear and gladden the heart. The text of "Bitter Sweet" makes pleasant reading, but it is the other two plays in this volume, "Easy Virtue" and "Hay Fever," which help to remind us that Mr. Coward possesses more than an ordinary talent. Actor, playwright, producer, writer of lyrics, composer, and comedian, Mr. Coward is that rare, that almost unique creature, a complete man of the theatre. "Hay Fever," if not his best, is certainly one of his most diverting comedies. Its riotous presentation of a week-end in the country house of a retired actress whose inveterate theatricality infects her family and is shared by her writer husband is one of the most actable and continuously amusing of farce comedies.

In his preface to Mr. Coward's book, Somerset Maugham throws out some interesting suggestions as to the lines on which dramatic dialogue is developing. He intimates that naturalistic dialogue has gone as far as it can and that the talk in modern plays is more crude, jerky, unliterary, and realistic than reality. Quoting St. John Ervine, he complains that what he calls the naturalistic method tends to dulness when the characters in the play are dull, but after reading these plays one is tempted to believe that the dulness, when it exists, must be blamed on the playwright, rather than on the method. The truth is that naturalistic dialogue, if by that one means talk taken down in short-hand and transferred unedited to the stage, is a practical impossibility. Every good play is a completely artificial thing, no matter how casually realistic it may seem. The dialogue in "Criminal Code" is indeed prison talk,—short, jerky sentences, exclamations, half finished phrases, but every line is written with a purpose, driven in with workmanlike precision. In this selection there is as much artifice as in the formulation of the most poetic phrase. On the other hand, Mr. Coward's cheerfully irresponsible artists pour out a steady stream of witty and diverting small talk which might at first glance seem impossibly artificial and literary. Yet anyone who is lucky enough to have been in such company has heard equally diverting talk, in snatches and sections, to be sure, but essentially of the same kind. Mr. Coward merely uses his prerogative of omnipotence to cram his play with the froth from innumerable champagne glasses. It is faster and funnier, but not essentially more impossible, than duller dialogue.

In Mr. Ervine's "First Mrs. Fraser" we see the critic, who is also a playwright, putting some of his theories into practice, and doing it very well. Mr. Ervine's plot and people might conceivably be both dull and ordinary if they were not handled with such adroitness by their creator. Nor is this because Mr. Ervine is strictly non-naturalistic in his dialogue and plot-making. He is as artificial as, and no more so than, every expert craftsman, adjusting his dialogue to his characters and charging it with continuous currents of electricity for the greater diversion of the beholder. Mrs. Fraser is a skilful and discreet manipulator of destinies. She walks pleasantly and gaily through the play, handling her recalcitrant son, her faithful beau, her ex-husband, and the rival wife with consummate skill. We know from the first rise of the curtain that she will eventually disentangle her husband from Mrs. Fraser number two and probably take him back again, but thanks to Mr. Ervine's skilful handling and suave conversations we are willing to follow the process step by step.

"Strictly Dishonorable" brings us back to New York, landing us in a speakeasy in the heart of Manhattan and regaling us with as gay, absurd, and hopefully naughty a comedy as the passing hour could demand. Mr. Preston Sturges has succeeded in brewing a pleasant light wine—*vin blanc,* in the last analysis—from time-honored ingredients. Here is the innocent little girl from the south who yearns for adventure and just doesn't get it; the quarrelsome fiancée, the handsome foreigner, the kindly if somewhat rough and ready judge, all generously mixed up with waiters, policemen, romance, and Castles in Spain—or was it Italy? Altogether a pleasant and innocuous fantasy, just sufficiently touched up with bedroom antics to make it ingratiating and to provide on the stage a thrill which the text lacks. Mr. Sturges's play, in plot and dialogue, in wisecracks and bachelor apartment setting, is well tried theatre stuff and can be thoroughly enjoyed as such. It finishes with refreshing flippancy a week of playgoing or an evening's reading. Taken together, these five dramatists prove that the theatre is, after all, not entirely moribund, and that it still continues to provide an immensely stimulating and varied experience for the discriminating playgoer.

The Comic Spirit

ENGLISH HUMOR. By J. B. PRIESTLEY. New York: Longmans, Green. 1930. $1.40.

IN this little volume, the fourth in the "English Heritage" series, Mr. Priestley has produced an excellent guide-book. From Chaucer to Chapin he has omitted hardly any man of fun who is at all considerable. Low comedy actors, comedy painters, cartoonists, the writers and the illustrators for *Punch*—all are here in a regiment of smiles.

Sheridan and Goldsmith are left out, the author says, because they were Irish, and Smollett because he was a Scot. Such exclusions, it must be objected, are rather ill-considered. One might almost as reasonably have barred Wycherley and Butler, who came from the Welsh border.

After what Mr. Priestley calls "a gallop and a gossip" over the lesser humorists, he narrows down admirably to the character of Parson Adams, for his "cool ethics and warm heart," of Uncle Toby, "solid as a hill," and of Mr. Collins in "his happy innocence." To project them, the author has selected quotations with skill and point. But when Mr. Priestley says he is unable to decide whether Isaak Walton and Fuller have humor, he can hardly have read either writer attentively. When he observes that Hogarth's pencil "never moved drolly," he should hasten to the National Gallery and look at "The Shrimp Girl."

The chapter on Dickens, striking at the core of that author's strength, is perhaps the ablest; it will make old readers blow the dust off their set of "Dickens' Works." The final chapter, on Shakespeare, while adding nothing to Shakespearean criticism, is justly an apotheosis of Falstaff.

As a standard of judgment to guide him, Mr. Priestley seems to have leaned a bit heavily on the essays of the late Professor Raleigh. One might suggest Meredith's "Essay on the Comic Spirit" as a stouter staff, if a staff must be used.

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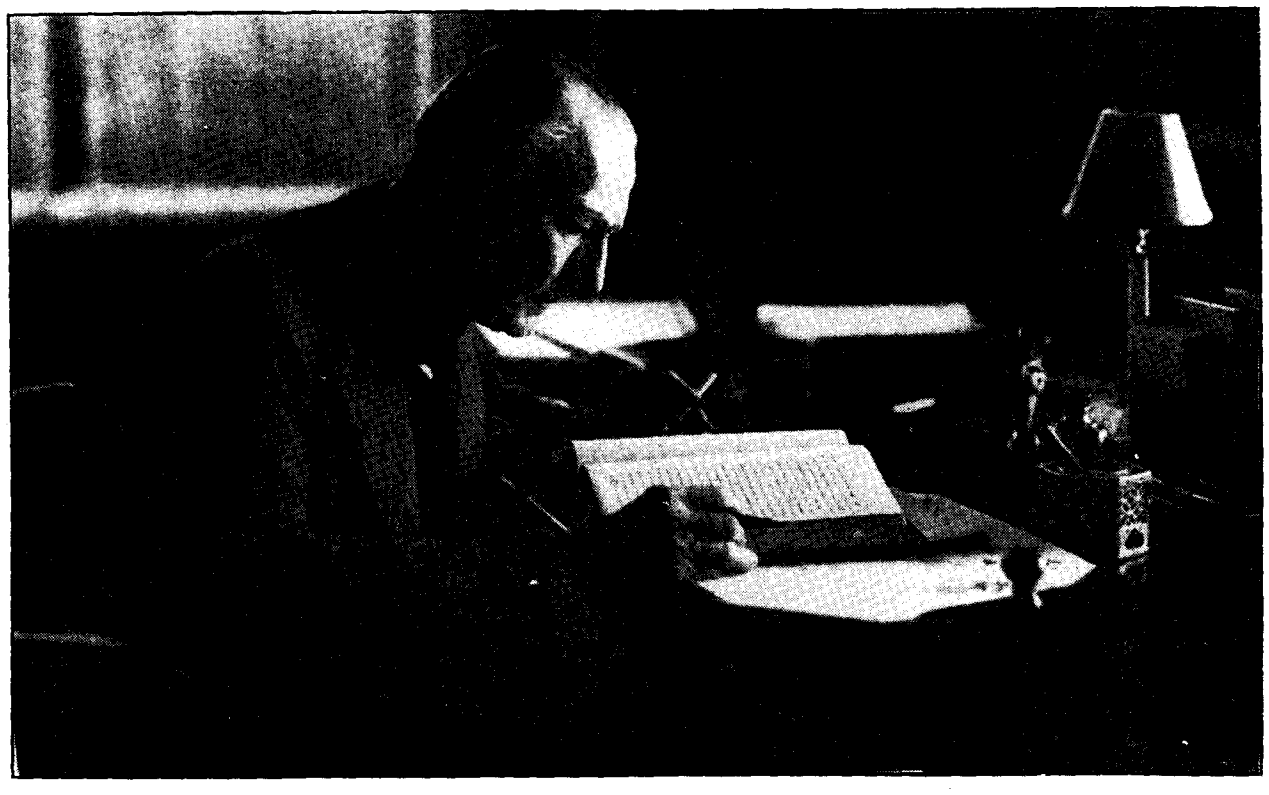

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HYMN TO THE SUN. By MALCOLM ROSS. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1930. $2.50.

MR. MALCOLM ROSS deserves the applause we give the hardy pioneer, even if he does not penetrate quite so far into unknown country, or bring back so large a quantity of treasure, as he intended. There is no more familiar staple in the book trade then the novel of the Frozen North. Almost always it is written to a formula, and a highly sentimentalized formula at that. The heroine is spotlessly pure, the hero is incredibly noble (though doomed to be misunderstood till the very last page), the villains are base beyond belief. And behind them all is the real protagonist, the Frozen North itself, which makes men or breaks them, turning the weakling into a hero and exposing the native baseness of the suavely veneered scoundrel.

Mr. Ross makes a gallant effort to get away from the customary shibboleths and give us something new. He writes of Labrador, which Jacques Cartier called "the land God gave to Cain"; and of Dr. Robin Grahame, who gave up the brilliant medical career he might have had in Scotland to be physician, judge, counsellor, and general guardian spirit of the Labrador natives—Dr. Grahame, who had lived twelve years in Laborador without a woman before he married Louisa Gardiner, and who had got so used to spreading his tenderness over an entire population that he had little of it left for his wife. Just about the time Louisa was growing "tired of being noble" there arrived on a summer fishing trip one Tom Steele, who had once stroked the Harvard crew, and had spent the subsequent ten years in Europe, pursuing and capturing women. He met Louisa and kissed her before he learned she was Mrs. Grahame; and thereupon he got himself put ashore, resolved, tenderfoot that he was, on spending the winter in Labrador for the sole purpose of seducing Louisa.

The net result, one is pained to report, is a moral victory for the formula. Mr. Ross valiantly keeps away from it, and one feels from his own evidence that he might have done better to let it have its way. For his three principal characters never quite impressed this reviewer as anything but figures in a story. He manages the suspense pretty well, and while he yields somewhat to sentimentality at the end he may be forgiven in view of the numerous temptations he resisted on the way. But this reviewer, possibly corrupted by too many Frozen-North novels of the usual kind, cannot help wishing that Mr. Ross had given us a little more of the melodrama that his own data would easily permit. He has escaped sentimentality without quite persuading the reader that he has achieved realism.

What does come through splendidly is the Frozen North itself—the picture of the life of Labrador. A country where you can hardly be really enthusiastic about the arrival of a stranger, because you yourself may need the food he will eat; yet where you will risk your life for his as a matter of course. Where men could hardly move about without the sea, and the dogs; yet where the sea is treacherous, and a man's own dogs are likely to turn on him and eat him up if he falls and does not instantly rise again. Where the major immediacies of life—not what our Humanist friends call the higher immediacies—are so constantly present that men have no time for any diversion except the telling of tall tales. All this is admirably done; and so are such vignettes as the picture of the Boston ornithologist, the episode where Dr. Grahame tells an Eskimo child the story of the Nativity in terms an Eskimo could understand. Without ever caring much whether Mr. Ross's lecherous Harvard oarsman (the author is a Yale man, dating from a period when the Harvard crew generally beat Yale) ever got his Louisa or not, this reviewer read the book with immense interest as a travelogue.

Strolling Actors

WANDERER'S END: The Odyssey of Don Paradise. By DENNIS CLEUGH. New York. Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1930. $2.50.

A DISARMING air of pleasant Bohemianism characterizes this posthumous novel. Mr. Cleugh writes with gusto and with a large-hearted human sympathy of the eccentricities found in the household of Mr. and Mrs. Pollen, old-line strolling actors. These itinerant players lived in a London suburb during the winters, but when summers came, off they went on the road, producing everything from "The Murder in the Red Barn" to "Hamlet." For plot, the novel tells of a discouraged young man, calling himself Don Paradise, whom the fates attach to the Pollen home and to the Pollen troupe. The virtues of the novel are its charming local color and its warm tolerance for eccentric humanity.

When "Wanderer's End" is at fault, the trouble is either undue length or unnecessary confusion. We are, of course, charitably minded, knowing that Mr. Cleugh had no time to finish the manuscript properly before he died; and so we overlook various loose ends and false starts. There is much in the book to enjoy, however, much that does not have to be excused by the circumstances of its publication.

Christopher Morley writes a Foreword to the novel, paying tribute to Mr. Cleugh and telling of Mr. Cleugh's association with the Old Rialto Theatre in Hoboken. The publishers inform us that the author's wife, Sophia Cleugh, completed the novel (there were two chapters unwritten) after the death of her husband.

Picaresque

FROLIC WIND. By RICHARD OKE. New York: Brewer and Warren, Inc. (Payson & Clarke.) 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

OUT of England comes a first novel by Richard Oke, "Frolic Wind," which shows a fine youthfulness coupled with both wit and sophistication. An amusing book full of a light satirical comedy aimed at the cannibalistic qualities of age which lives upon the vigor and brains of youth, it seems too bad that it should have any purpose but the producing of laughter. The flaw of the book is that Mr. Oke, having set about to attack vain old age, follows his completely successful satirical sallies with a melodramatic Armageddon which is neither diverting nor convincing.

"Frolic Wind" is the story of an English house party at Pagnell Bois where the great and the near great have been sought and entertained through generations. Now the hospitable ones who carry on this head-hunting tradition are the four sisters Athaliah, Cleone, Bernice, and Damaris whose combined age is 315. All goes on upon this house party as upon innumerable house parties before, except that young lovers are discovered swimming together in young nakedness in the pond while a flash of lightning kills the mysterious Lady Athaliah in her tower. The disclosures which follow precipitately upon her death make it certain that, however innocent or guilty the young man and woman were in the pond, their elders, for all their pretenses, are guilty of a majority of the crimes prohibited by law, manners, and decency.

The smart hilarity of the first half and more of the book indicates clearly enough that Mr. Oke has great talent as a writer of satirical comedy of character and society. He has that wise insight into character so essential to good comedy and he has as well the immortal gift of silliness. Thus the single poem which he puts into his book:

I'm a rag-picker,
and, in the summer,
my brother picks hops,
and my sister spends hours
picking flowers
for London shops;
my father picks pockets at races (we
are all honest but he);
and my aunt picks her teeth;
we cannot pick and choose.

He had thought of calling it "Picaresque" he admits.

The first of the book is so delightful that it seems unkind to mention the last of the book. The last indicates that Mr. Oke has a heart, one of those large, red hearts the possession of which is sometimes so disastrous to a sense of humor. This valentine heart has betrayed Mr. Oke into love with his only two uninteresting characters, his artist hero and his sweet girl heroine. For their benefit he smashes all his other characters with a hammer after having already mortally wounded them with the rapier of his wit. This melodramatic butchery of souls in the form of a neurotic truth party brings Mr. Oke's book to an undistinguished end after so happy a beginning.

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author of

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Revolution as an Art

By Bernard Faÿ

IF slogans are needed for a presidential campaign in the United States, they are just as necessary to Parisian writers. Without a good and sonorous, and if possible, an objectionable slogan there is no real fun in starting new literary fashions. The public does not realize what is going on; it fails to be scandalized, and quarrels become too vague, too intellectual. So the ambitious young people of Paris have acquired a real knack at inventing literary slogans; and just as good cooks put always on their menus the word "pure" the young Parisians have chosen in the past ten years "pure" as the necessary seasoning of all slogans. Five years ago it was "pure poetry," "pure art," "pure literature," today it is "pure revolution."

Nothing short of that will satisfy them. A radical is no good, he does not care enough for revolution; a socialist is not much better, he dreams of improving the world rather than of revolutionizing it; a Bolshevik is somewhat more attractive, for he has *élan* and invention, but he is not satisfactory. In general he does not take revolution as an art in itself, as it should be taken, he takes it as a means, phuh!

The revolutionary fad is now supreme among the young writers of France (not that *all* are revolutionist, but that the most noisy ones are). It has developed gradually since 1919 and is actually in full swing; many causes helped to make it popular, some of them quite unexpected. For instance, the campaign against war which has been going on since 1919, encouraged by the radicals, the liberals, the uplifters of all countries, as also by the United States, the Carnegie Foundation, the League of Nations, Krishnamourti, Gandhi, and the Soviets, has been one of the main reasons for this new fashion. Young people in Europe need excitement; baseball, football, fraternity initiations do not provide enough for them. And national elections are considered decidedly dull in Europe. The young people were, nevertheless, quite ready to give up war as a thrill; they had had rather too much of it. They willingly enlisted in the great crusade against war, and made money by selling violently anti-war books, belligerently pacifist novels. That was quite all right—Berlin, Paris, London, and Geneva approved of it, New York and Moscow bought it. And it sounded awfully "human." As a matter of fact it was a little less naïve and innocuous than people on this side of the Atlantic believed, because to attack war was at the same time to attack standing armies and national military service; it led directly to making fun of national hopes and faith, to showing up the emptiness of national devotion, of patriotism, and even of the idea of nation. Most of these books tended, directly or indirectly to prove that class, not nation, was the real distinction between men. They claimed that the French, German, American, and English privates suffered from the war, while the French, German, American, and English generals enjoyed it. The anti-war campaign built at one and the same time a sound hatred of war, a somewhat less sound hatred of officers, of generals, and of chiefs in general, and a rather disturbing worship of all forms of violence and murder which are not war.

The demigod nation, was broken to pieces, and the God war was covered with mud, but a new God was created and a big golden statue of him erected—revolution.

There our nice and clever European boys found the excitement they wished for. As soon as they had written an essay, a novel, a story against war they wrote a poem, a novel, or an essay in praise of revolutions in general, and of the Russian revolution in particular. Of course some of them had good financial reasons to do so, but with many others (for most of them I should say) it was sheer enthusiasm. And it was unavoidable they had not given up their worship of violence; they could not, it was too deep in them, and their souls were not really changed by the sufferings of war, they had transferred this tendency from one kind of organized and rather old-fashioned violence to another one, newer, wilder, less organized, and consequently more destructive, more exciting. It was always "Siva," but a new and more deadly incarnation of "Siva."

It began with a magazine started by Barbusse, the author of "Le Feu," the great anti-war war book of France. But this did not go very far. Those were ponderous, clumsy men, they could not possibly launch a new fashion. Then a group of most clever, most attractive, and most gifted young men took up the same task and, this time, succeeded. As a group they were known as "Surréalistes," because they claimed that by some half-physiological, half-literary process they were able to express not only this fallacious outside appearance of things which we call the real btu the true inside of things, the "surréal." The theory was exciting, the practice also, but it failed to stir up the French public. People began to look and listen only when they announced their new creed: "Revolution for the sake of Revolution." That motto proved to be most successful, it brought thrill and interest to the French literary circles, which were rather bored at that time. The surréalistes disclaimed any other political idea than hatred and scorn for the *bourgeois*, the people who believed in God, nation, and duty, and any other belief than the need of permanent revolution, to keep the human race in a good condition. The theory had something new and pleasant, and the leaders of the movement, M.M. Aragon, Breton, Eluard, René Cravel, were really great writers, as well as very charming young men. Unfortunately the outside manifestations of their followers did not prove as bright as the program established by the chiefs: they insulted Jean Cocteau, they hissed the Russian Ballets, they addressed letters to the French people saying that Poincaré was an ass. All this seemed tame and banal. People expected the Surréalistes would set fire to the Opéra or the Elysée, shoot in the streets, or at least go to jail. They simply got married, and not even all of them did that.

That was a disappointment. Some of the followers and a good many of their friends organized a revolution against them. Hence quarrels, too complicated to be told here. Finally a new group of revolutionists for the sake of revolution appeared, with two excellent writers among them: M. Malraux and Mr. Emmanuel Berl. Malraux wrote a remarkable book, "Les Conquérants," a description of the nationalist-Bolshevik Revolution in China, and M. Berl published the best pamphlet of these last years "Mort de la Pensée Bourgeoise," pointed attack against the leading French writers of today. These two books are probably the two most entertaining French books of the year. They provide a glowing picture of all the joys one can find in revolution if one is a pure revolutionist. They even give some recipes showing how to become one, although in this they are not perfectly clear. And of course M. Berl violently attacks the Surréalistes as not being thorough and sincere enough in the revolutionary faith.

But please don't believe that they are joking. Although the Surréalistes and the other "pure revolutionists" have a sense of humor, they are convinced of what they say; they are convincing a good number of young people in France and all over Europe, where they are acquiring a following of young writers. Some of them have most attractive personalities and cannot be dismissed as noisy children: Breton is a deep and interesting thinker, Aragon has a style like Bossuet, René Cravel is probably the most appealing character of his generation and is also a very gifted novelist. They cannot be dismissed with a smile.

Probably the most striking feature of their curious career is that they are read in bourgeois circles and have practically no popular following.

They show that to have peace, it is not enough to destroy war.

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Notes on the Romansch

By Anne Goodwin Winslow

THE year just ended has seen two important additions to Romansch literature: Dr. Velleman's eagerly awaited Dictionary and the collected poems of the Honorable Peider Lansel, at present Swiss Consul at Leghorn and for many years now the beloved poet of the Engadine. In this tastefully printed volume, which borrows its interesting title, "The Antique Inkstand" (*Il Vegl Chalamêr*) from the initial poem, Dr. Lansel has collected with discretion and restraint the lyrics from his earlier books which seemed to him most definitely important and offers to his readers a hundred or more poems written in the Romansch language, and some thirty-six translations from other poets into the same idiom. It is a rich harvest gleaned from years of wide experience and fruitful thought, and the compatriots of the poet have every reason to feel pride in the fact that of all the languages at his command he should have chosen these echoes of their beloved mountains for the expression of his lyric gift.

The Engadine press of Samedan and St. Moritz, Switzerland, has recently published a work of great interest to philologists and of inestimable practical value to those who from motives of patriotism, erudition, or merely a romantic curiosity, are interested in that noble survival of the Latin tongue that one may still hear in the mountains and valleys of the most picturesque part of Switzerland. This language is neither the French, German, or Italian heard in the various cities of this polyglot land, nor yet the pretty and expressive Swiss-German with which visitors have grown familiar. It is a speech which differs as much from any one of these as they differ from one another; a speech with its own origin and history which has held itself quite proudly uncontaminated through many centuries: the Lingua Ladina or Romansch language spoken in the Engadine. The publication in question is an Abridged Dictionary of this vernacular, giving to each word its French, German, and English equivalent and giving besides many indications with references to topography and population of great usefulness to the student. When one takes into consideration the magnitude and variety of such a content, the word "abridged" in the title would seem to have rather an ironic signification, but by some miracle of lexicography the author has succeeded in restricting to one small volume which might be carried, if not in the vest pocket, at least in the pocket of one's coat, what seems a fair library of information. It is the work of Dr. Anton Velleman of the University of Geneva whose Grammatica Ladina was noticed in the columns of this *Review* something more than a year ago. Dr. Velleman, who in addition to his professorial duties and his association with the League of Nations, still finds the leisure and the strength for philological labors of such gravity and importance, has achieved in this, his latest publication a literary *tour de force* which has excited the admiration and eulogy of European critics.

"Of the three works recently published by M. Réne Grousset, an acknowledged authority on the history and art of Asia, the longest and, for the layman, most opportune is 'Les Civilizations de L'Orient' (Crès, 75 francs each volume)," says the London *Observer*. "For a history of art, this title may seem misleading. But it was chosen with a purpose. M. Grousset's point of view is not merely esthetic. His object has been to identify Eastern art with the circumstances in which it originated, then to explain its evolution. The first of the four volumes, which dealt with Egypt, Assyria, Persia, and Arabia, has now been succeeded by the second, on India; the third and fourth, on China, Central Asia, and Japan, will be issued in the spring and autumn of this year."

The first number of England's latest periodical, the *Week-End Review*, came from the presses last week.

The journal has been founded by Gerald Barry, former editor of the *Saturday Review*, who resigned with all his colleagues when the former proprietors switched suddenly to the support of Lord Beaverbrook's United Empire party.

"The choice of time was our own," writes Mr. Barry in an introductory note, "and we stand for judgment as we are."

Contributors to the first number include Arnold Bennett, who becomes dramatic critic; Humbert Wolfe and James Stephens, among the poets; A. P. Herbert and Gerald Gould among the esayists, and the former *Saturday Review* editorial staff.

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"The most beautiful piece of printing to come to our desk in months. Certainly the finest bit of periodical manufacture in existence."

New Haven Journal-Courier

"Its illustrations are the best yet achieved in any magazine."

Kansas City Journal-Post

"A magnificent tribute to business. Words adequate to describe this de luxe journal of business are available, but they would be regarded as gross exaggerations save by those who have examined FORTUNE."

Harrisburg (Pa.) News

"Its publishers have accomplished a notable achievement—and done it just a little too perfectly. Radicals, debunkers, philosophers, buffoons and Jeremiahs have failed; and where they have failed, the cult of the de luxe has itself accomplished a complete success in these few pages of print."

San Diego Union

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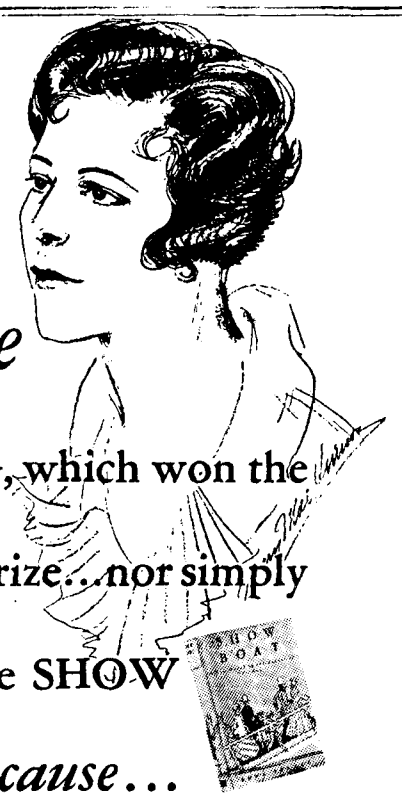

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Biography

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF SIR HARRY JOHNSTON. By ALEX JOHNSTON. Cape & Smith. 1930. $3.50.

It cannot be said that Sir Harry Johnston gains anything in stature by the well-intentioned "Life and Letters" written by his brother, who for some years was also his secretary. The volume is intended "to supplement not to supersede" Sir Harry's own autobiography, "The Story of My Life," and it gives a certain amount of interesting material, especially regarding Johnston's African explorations and his relations with H. M. Stanley and Cecil Rhodes, which is not to be found in the other book. Marked by an almost excessive fraternal piety, it will be read with sympathy by admirers of the many-sided genius who is always a hero to his secretary brother; but so far as the essentials of Johnston's full and fascinating life are concerned it adds little to what was already known. And that little at times might well have been less: one could wish for more of the authentic letters and less of fraternal exegesis.

There is little doubt that the man who added thousands of square miles in Africa to the British Empire was somewhat scurvily treated by his Government, but it is difficult to believe that the hearts of the politicians and the permanent officials were quite as black as the indignant Alex paints them. Sir Harry Johnston was a man of extraordinary gifts: explorer, administrator, naturalist, writer, artist, linguist—there seemed to be nothing that he could not do and he did everything well; at the end of a career full enough to satisfy a dozen ordinary men he started writing novels, one of which, at any rate, is by no means the least of his claims to distinction. But his restless energy, his versatility, his passionate adoption of "causes," above all his Puckish sense of humor, were qualities which the official mind always and everywhere is prone to regard with suspicion. The worst of Alex Johnston's partisan judgment on the official treatment of his brother is that it makes one wish to hear the other side of the case. And there is nothing to be gained by a stirring up of old controversies. Sir Harry Johnston's fame needs no apology; it stands secure—that of a brilliant, chivalric spirit (within the external trappings of a humorous-faced, pudgy little man), who may occasionally have tilted at windmills but whose lance did knightly service for his country.

CANFIELD: The True Story of the Greatest Gambler. By ALEXANDER GARDINER. Doubleday, Doran. 1930. $2.50.

Today every other person you meet gambles on the stock exchange, and colyumists, dramatic critics, and college instructors swap stories of their losses with business men and brokers. In the Gilded Age and later, this human proclivity was satisfied by the roulette wheel and the faro box. Richard A. Canfield, the gentlemanly keeper of two famous gambling hells in New York and Saratoga, grew up in the period when the Bowery was lined with policy houses and lower Broadway with luxurious gaming "clubs." He had famous predecessors; the best known were probably John Morrissey's establishment on West Twenty-fourth Street and Chamberlin's on Twenty-fifth. Morrissey went to Congress; Chamberlin opened a noted restaurant in Washington and built a great hotel at Old Point Comfort. Canfield never connected himself with great political figures of the day as these two men did. Yet by virtue of the scale of his operations, the size of the sums won and lost at his famous Forty-fourth Street house, his defiance of the law through years of public agitation and denunciation, and his battle with William Travers Jerome, he doubtless deserves to head the list of great American gamblers. In his big brownstone house near Delmonico's, with its Oriental rugs, masterpieces of painting, and rich foods and wines, he made a fortune; according to this volume, he accumulated $4,900,000 from his gambling houses, and in Wall Street at one time increased this to $12,400,000. But he was caught in the panic of 1907, and lost much of his riches. When he died from a fall in the subway in 1914, he was worth perhaps two millions.

Mr. Gardiner's book on Canfield is careful and thorough, and it need not be said that so far as its materials extend it is interesting; but on the whole it is a disappointment. The reason is that all that is significant or notable in Canfield's career could easily be condensed into two fairly long magazine articles, and the man and his activities hardly justify a 337-page book. Most of the data on which it is founded is obviously drawn from the press; some of it comes from old friends of Canfield's. Though he was a friend of James McNeil Whistler, who painted his portraits, he wrote few letters and no memoirs. Mr. Gardiner has weighed his newspaper evidence critically and well; he draws an amusing picture of the great days of Canfield's, Dave Johnson's, and Hallenbecks, with Anthony Comstock, Senator Brackett, Bet-a-million Gates, and Hatzfeldt among the *dramatis personæ*; but though the book will some day document a valuable page in some social history of New York City, it is a bit thin.

Drama

DON FELIPE. By *D. Maitland Bushby*. Nankin, Tenn.: Sawyer.

PRODUCING PLAYS. By *C. B. Purdom*. Dutton. $2.50.

Education

INSOMNIA. By *Joseph Collins*. Appleton. $1.50.

METEOROLOGY. By *Richard Whatham*. Stokes. $3.

MAGAZINE ARTICLE WRITING. By *Ernest Brennecke, Jr.* and *Donald L. Clerk*. Macmillan. $3.

NEW METHOD IN COMPOSITION. Fifth Year. First Half. By *William A. Boylan, Constance W. Fuller*, and *Albert S. Taylor*. Scribners. 60 cents.

MANUAL FOR "OUR ENGLISH." By *Joseph Villiers Denney, Eleanor L. Skinner*, and *Ada M. Skinner*. Scribners. 84 cents.

MANUAL FOR GOOD READING. Fourth Reader. Fifth Reader. Sixth Reader. By *John M. Manly, Edith Rickert*, and *Nina Leubrie*. Scribners. 84 cents.

STUDIES IN MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHING. Macmillan.

ENGLISH MASTERY. By *William R. Bowlin*. Merrill.

THE NURSERY CHILD IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL. By *Anna Freelove Betts*. Abingdon.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHILDHOOD. By *Edgar James Swift*. Appleton. $3.

Fiction

NATIVE SOIL. By ALLAN UPDEGRAFF. Day. 1930. $2.50.

This novel is an extraordinary mélange. It begins in a vein of fantastic humor: the hero, Gerald Enthoven, returning after a long sojourn in Paris to his native city of Springfield, Mo., finds it more advanced than anything he has ever encountered. A friend offers to cede Enthoven his wife, for the good of all concerned; a girl, wanting a full education, applies formally for the post of his mistress—here the general reader will be apt to risk the confutation that overwhelmed Judge Brack, and cry "*People don't do such things!*" But the idea of a man of the great world being driven back to the respectability of Paris by the unconventionality of Springfield, "in the region made famous by Harold Bell Wright," is a fine comic conception, and the reader willingly suspends his unbelief and prepares to enjoy the fun. Almost at once, however, he is drawn through a chapter of sentiment beside the grave of Enthoven's mother into a tragedy, a hideous and humiliating accident. The book proper ends with the gruesome grotesquerie of a cremation, and, finally, the incident Mr. Louis Bromfield has twice treated so sardonically, the attempt at a romantic scattering of ashes that ends in undignified failure.

So much of the book, to draw a single effect from so many moods, is a contribution to the literature of sophisticated futility. Since all emotion is painful, the author seems to say, it is best to regard sexual love as a ridiculous extravaganza, filial love as a chapter of Sterne, and death as a nightmare, macabre rather than tragic. And, after making these violences to the soul seem as petty as possible, let us cheer ourselves with culture and *savoir vivre*. Thus, just as the young English wits are discovering charm in the spacious days of the great Victoria, Mr. Updegraff is pleased to decry the world's capitals, New York and Chicago, and cry up Paris, France, and Springfield, Missouri, as two exquisite provincial cities, essentially the same.

This effect does not quite come off, how-

(*Continued on page* 856)

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Points of View

Analyzing Mr. Lippmann

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

There is one criticism of Mr. Lippmann's able "Preface to Morals" which I think has escaped notice. It is his amazing use of the portmanteau sentence. In this he reminds one of a crowd at an accident: "Did you hurt yourself? Shall I call a doctor? Did you slip or fall? . . ." The only answer possible is of the parliamentary type—to the first query "Yes"—to the second "No"—to the third "Both"! Reading Mr. Lippmann's analysis of the age some of us slower-moving students of men and things will feel the need to stop continually, and to take breath. There are occasional landslides of rhetoric which are carrying away great masses of readers, and most reviewers, that seem to us to carry away much also that is permanent and worth preserving.

The fact seems to be that Mr. Lippmann—like the age he analyzes—is in too great a hurry. He lights on Dr. Whitehead's definition "God is not concrete but He is the ground for concrete actuality," and finds in it a proof that our age is hard put to it. Yet this is a restatement of old truths: the "Upanishads," for example, say "Uncreate and void of qualities He is the author of qualities," and the "Tao-te King," "Itself invisible, unnameable, the Tao (Reason) is Order, and orders the visible world." *Both are religious works at least* twenty-five centuries old. The definition of the undefinable is no modern problem! And why omit such other aphorisms of Dr. Whitehead as "God is the Kingdom of Heaven," He is "the ideal companion who transmutes what has been lost into a living fact within His own nature," He is "the mirror which discloses to every creature its own goodness," and "the element in life in virtue of which our purposes extend beyond values for ourselves to values for others." These fine statements are also in "Religion in the Making," and they go far to show that Mr. Lippmann is not right in thinking that the modern man "has to throw overboard the theocratic idea." There is still room for God the Invisible King in modern philosophy.

What the modern man must do, and what the Modernists are doing, is to get rid of certain trappings of the Divine autocrat, and to keep, with this refined image of a transcendent Lord, that of an immanent Power which Mr. Lippmann approves. It is here that some of his strangest portmanteau sentences are to be found. Thus we read:

> . . . It could be demonstrated, I think, that in the central intuition of Aristotle, of the author of the Fourth Gospel of Buddha, of Spinoza, . . . the theocratic principle is irrelevant. No one of these teachers held the belief, which is at the heart of theocratic religion, that the relationship between God and man is somehow analogous with that of a king to his subjects, that the relationship is in any sense a transaction between personalities involving, however subtly, a quid pro quo, that God's will and the human will are interacting forces.

No New Testament scholar would agree that theocracy is irrelevant to the purpose of the Fourth Gospel. For while it has in it a Platonic element, its main purpose is to show Christ as revealing his Father: its prologue deals with the creative fiat, and its central interest is in the divine Word at work as a king among men, to whom he says, "Ye are my friends, if ye do that which I command you." We cannot get rid of the great things in the Hebraic tradition which, with the best in that of Greece and Rome, combine with natural science to make up our modern heritage. The life and teachings of Jesus in whom the most gifted peoples unite, are still central in history. A morality will be found to meet the needs of our age as his luminous principles are resolutely applied to its complex problems. Behind the Fourth Gospel, which is the crowning achievement of Hebrew monotheism, stands the august figure of Jesus, who is himself the crown and glory of Hebrew prophetism. It is quite true that the modern man too easily leaves this tremendous figure alone; and that where he approaches it, it is with an amazing astigmatism like that of Rabbi Lewis Browne, who calls this tremendous genius "the dear young Galilean," or of Mr. Wells, who calls him "the lean and strenuous Jesus." Men see in a great character what they are fitted to see; and it is arresting to note his influence on great leaders like Gandhi and Kagawa in Asia, to say nothing of Western followers. Nor must we forget the Modernists.

Mr. Lippmann seriously misrepresents their work. I have just tried the following paragraph upon three friends, one a Modernist preacher of great ability, the other a well-known professor of psychology and a liberal Christian, and the third the leading authority in our time upon the environment of early Christianity. Two gasped: the third is in a State University and hardened to the naïveté of the sophisticated. In it Mr. Lippmann says that Modernism is rightly credited by the Fundamentalists as making the Gospel a symbolic record of experience, and rejecting it as an actual record of events. The Christian movement, he says:

> . . . was based on the story of the birth, the life, the ministry, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That story set forth the facts which certify the Christian experience. Modernism, which in varying degree casts doubt upon the truth of that story, may therefore be defined as an attempt to preserve selected parts of the experience after the facts which inspired it have been rejected.

No Modernist denies the birth, the life, the ministry, the death of Jesus Christ. All Modernists deny the miraculous birth, and the resurrection in the sense of the reanimation of the body of Jesus; but all are deeply concerned with getting at the actual facts of his life. The Fourth Gospel itself is modern in reinterpreting the facts, but emphatic in its emphasis upon the true embodiment of the Logos in time. It is rather the unskilled critics without the Church, and only a very few uncouth ones amongst them, who seek to get rid of the historical elements. Mr. Lippmann's affiliation is too often with these; and he believes that the "higher religion" will concern itself with experiences unrelated to this "archaic . . . questionable . . . touching, quaint medley of poetry, rhetoric, fable, exhortation, and insight into human travail."

For one more example of this strange trick of assembling what does not belong together, let me refer the authors to the page where asceticism, "prejudice against the human body and a tendency to be disgusted with its habits," are attributed alike to Socrates, Jesus, and the Buddha!

> There is no doubt that in one form or another, Socrates and Buddha, Jesus and St. Paul, Plotinus and Spinoza, taught that the good life is impossible without ascetism, that without renunciation of many of the ordinary appetites, no man can really live well. Prejudice against the human body and a tendency to be disgusted with its habits, a contempt for the ordinary concerns of daily experience is to be found in all of them. . . .

The word asceticism cannot be used concerning Jesus, who was accused of being the friend of publicans and sinners, and who insisted that it was the thoughts of the mind and the wishes of the heart that mattered. Socrates again was by no means an ascetic in so far as any "prejudice against the human body or disgust with its habits" goes, and the Middle Way of Buddha is notable for the splendid sanity of its refusal to be sidetracked on the one hand into asceticism, and on the other into sensuality. It is true, of course, that both in Christian and Buddhist records we find monastic interpretations; but these do not belong to the Founders except in the very general sense that all religion involves the choice of a motive of greater worth and less intensity instead of a motive of greater intensity and lesser worth. The modern man would indeed do well to study these three great personalities, of whom we have very touching and intimate records; and who can be seen vividly fulfilling the spirit of their lives in their dying moments. Accounts of these crises have come down to us—accounts which bear upon them the hallmark of reality, and considerable evidence of the work of eye-witnesses. Here we see the Buddha calmly and humorously facing death, with the exhortation to his disciples that they obey the Dharma for principle of the universe; Socrates urging them to attend not to him but to his teachings of a universe in which a divine order is to be embodied; and Jesus committing himself with heroic faith and calm certainty to his Heavenly Father.

As to the life after death, which Mr. Lippmann rejects, a portmanteau sentence from another writer, Dr. Streeter of Oxford, is apposite: "Plato, Zoroaster, the philosophers of India, the Taoist sages of China, to say nothing of outstanding thinkers of more recent date—men divided from one another by race, temperament, epoch, and civilization—have all agreed, though on very diverse grounds, in looking for some kind of life beyond the grave. Their arguments may often fail to convince, but the fact of their broad, general agreement is an impressive one. It is not to the pigmies of our race that we owe the persistence of the belief in immortality; nor is it the mark of a moral weakling to value or desire it." The belief in personal survival is indeed based on belief in a righteous and loving God who "is not the God of the dead but the living"—who is Himself Light and Life and Love, the Poet and Father of the Universe.

The greatest moral teachers have been the greatest believers. Their ethic is the fruit of which their faith in the unseen is the root. We have not outgrown the great masters of the spirit: we are far from having lived up to their fundamental principles. This is why the Kingdom of righteousness languishes. If this is indeed "The Twilight of Christianity" it is a twilight of the dawn.

For Mr. Lippmann's plea for a morality of detachment there is more to be said. But why go back to stoicism? The solution lies rather in a more intelligent use of the great teachings of the world's master-minds. American educators are just beginning to face the fact that religion can be made academically respectable! And our youth must go, not to Hollywood or the Hearst Press for their morality, but to Plato, Isaiah, Jesus, and the Buddha! Of these Jesus is the clearest, simplest, most universal and poignant. What illumination we get upon his central intuition of God's Fatherhood when we practice brotherhood to men of other races—as he did. What a deepened understanding of Law when we begin to obey it! What an insight into Love when we begin to pay the price in sacrifice!

The idea of God then which Jesus had is of a King who is also a Father, of a Power that is at once within us and above us, and inasmuch as he embodied this grand ideal in parables of exquisite artistry and in a life of unique harmony, we have in him a symbol and image of God which the modern man will seek in vain elsewhere, and which is only waiting to inspire a new art and a new power for heroic living. The Fourth Gospel shows us as in a symbol the coming of the Greeks with their sense of balance and harmony and the beauty of life, and we find Jesus meeting them with the great teachings of suffering and sacrifice.

Have artists yet exhausted this tremendous theme? Here is the Imago Dei which is still inspiring men to great thoughts and great actions. The heroic Kagawa in Japan, whose religion is very orthodox Christianity expressing itself in social applications of amazing range and power, is planning to put the great symbolic scenes of the Fourth Gospel into a No drama, or mystery play, so that Japan may see for herself the inner spiritual meaning of Christianity. And what of cathedrals like Westminster and Liverpool? Art, in a word, is not as Mr. Lippmann says "a lost province" of Christianity. Nor is business, where today strenuous efforts are being put forth for better things, and where the profit motive is being replaced, slowly but surely, by others more worthy.

As for the family, while a great revolution is taking place, there is a chance that after various experiments towards the new freedom the modern man will find his way back beyond the legalism of the churches to the freedom of their Founder. "He stood above all things for the liberty of the spirit," said a working-man to me in a casual meeting, and there is in the Christian principle of the sacredness of personality, a solution of these and kindred problems. It is of the genius of Jesus to combine in a harmonious blending the elements of authority from the old religion with the spirit of freedom of which his life is an embodiment. His God is Father as well as King. This is the only name which the Johannine Christ uses. Yet God's sovereignty is clear. It is that of Love, not of despotic power. Evil men can reject it: and they do.

And so when our author comes in the third part of his book to the age-long problem of evil, we find here too side by side with some fine thought and brilliant writing, certain strange misunderstandings. With many others before him he puzzles over the question "why a good and all-powerful deity chose to make man good through a school of suffering, when he might have created him good in the first place." This is the last and most amazing of the portmanteau sentences with which I need deal here. To any trained mind it contains two very glaring fallacies. No modern theologian uses the words omnipotent or all-powerful to describe God: for God is bound by the laws of His own character. As the Bible says, He cannot deny Himself. And as a small boy pointed out, He cannot open and shut a window at the same time. Above all, He cannot "make men good"; for goodness involves freedom to choose, and a good man is good in a different sense from a good machine or even a good horse.

That much of Christianity needs shedding, like an out-worn chrysalis, is clear, and this is the process which is continually at work in any human society which is really alive, and in any system whether it be philosophical or scientific or religious. Certainly "the modern man," if he is at all fair and qualified to judge, will see that natural science is going through the same travail-pains. When we remember that Christianity has been in the world for nineteen centuries, and has had to meet change after change, and revolution after revolution, we shall be amazed to find at once how much of its core remains applicable, and how little has yet been applied to meet the needs of man in a changing age. And if, as I think is strongly and well insisted by Mr. Lippmann, we do need a new emphasis on disinterestedness, we shall find the Sermon on the Mount calling us to "singleness" of eye, and the "Bavagad-gita" to detachment. From these deep wells we may drink with Gandhi—and be timeless with the saints. "Whirl is King," said Aristophanes whom Mr. Lippmann quotes: "Intuition is King," says Plotinus. Upon the intuition of the saints that God is the supreme value—"the Friend and Companion and the True Reward,"—Theocracy is founded, its ethic for time, its hope for eternity. Its King is as democratic and as exacting as Love.

KENNETH SAUNDERS

New York:

Humanism Again

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

I recognize the chivalry of Norman Foerster, who, in your issue of March 1, defends Mr. H. H. Clark, reviewer of Mr. Foerster's book, against my charge that his words "point the way to a doting on tradition." I do not wish to prolong what may seem a trivial discussion; yet it seems to me that the value of humanism will depend largely upon its disciples' avoidance of eighteenth century rigidities; and Mr. Foerster's claims for Mr. Clark, based upon a general knowledge of the man and his writings, do not alter the fact that the specific words of the review in question might be quoted, in defence of his position, by the most inveterate adulant of the past. May I repeat one sentence of Mr. Clark's review?: "We must seek aid in more venerable traditions, carefully winnowed, which have won the unchanging respect of the ages for their ministry to the deepest and most universal need of man, for their ministry to happiness?" The point of my protest was that history has given enough object lessons to make us wish the leaders of movements would guard their words (as fully as possible) against their followers' misuse.

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY.

New York.

On Dido

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

I was interested in Mrs. Allinson's review of Gertrude Atherton's "*Dido*" in a recent number of the *Saturday Review.* But I was surprised that she spoke of the end of the story as if it were an entirely new invention. According to many poets and to what is probably the more authoritative tradition, Iarbas and not Æneas was the cause of Dido's death. In Book XVI of the Greek Anthology is an anonymous poem "On a Painting of Dido." "Thou seest, O stranger, the exact likeness of far-famed Dido, a portrait shining with divine beauty. Even so I was, but had not such a character as thou hearest, having gained glory rather for reputable things. For neither did I ever set eyes on Æneas nor did I reach Libya at the time of the sack of Troy, but to escape a forced marriage with Iarbas I plunged the two-edged sword into my heart. Ye Muses, why did ye arm chaste Vergil against me to slander thus falsely my virtue?" This poem Ausonius translated into Latin, and Turberville in turn translated Ausonius into English under the title "Of Dido and the Truth of Her Death." Boccaccio and Lydgate are also among those who gave the preference to this version of the story.

This version Mrs. Atherton cleverly combined with the more familiar Vergilian tale. She has given the climax an original and modern turn, however, in that she makes Dido kill herself to save her city, whereas, according to the older poets, she "slouh hirselff," as Lydgate says, "tobserue hir chastite."

ELIZABETH NITCHIE.

Goucher College.

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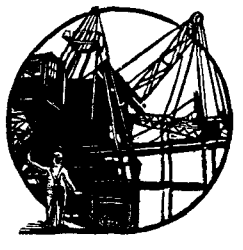

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from page* 852)

ever, not altogether from Mr. Updegraff's defects, but partly from his qualities. He has not the polished elegance necessary, nor the pitiless detachment. He is more deeply moved than he wishes by death and love. His hero is a romantic *manqué,* philosophic when he should be amorous and bitter when he should be philosophic, who thinks of suicide and thinks better of it, and Mr. Updegraff is much like him, spoiling his romanticism with cynicism and his cynicism with romanticism. He has succeeded admirably in conveying his confusion in the face of the universe, but readers are beginning to demand something more than confusion.

PURE GOLD. By O. E. Rolvaag. Harpers. 1930. $2.50.

After giving us two broad studies of typical pioneers and almost universal phases of pioneer life, Dr. Rolvaag turns to a narrowly intense study of the atypical and abnormal. His setting is the Northwest, he still deals with the Norwegians he knows so well. But his harsh etching of two unlovely misers, Lizzie and Louis Houglum, will disappoint those who admired the serenity, the humor, and the panoramic spaciousness of "Giants in the Earth." It is dexterously and vigorously done, but was it worth the doing?

Louis Houglum is a farm-hand, Lizzie the daughter of a substantial farmer. They marry, and settle down with a mortgage, some livestock, and $1,500 given them by Lizzie's parents. As they struggle to make the farm their own, money gradually comes to be the one important fact in the universe. Stinginess is a common rural trait, and the lust for wealth is frequently met among little landowners and Western mortgage-brokers. But Dr. Rolvaag has given us in the Houglums, a pair with a pathological characteristic of a particularly nasty kind. Without children, they make goldpieces and banknotes their "babies," "brats," and "kids"; from refusing to meet unusual expenses they go on to refuse meeting the expenses of common decency; from cheating others they progress to cheating each other. They hide their money, sleep with it, wear it in money belts, make it their all. They get into trouble during the war because they refuse to buy bonds. One would expect such people to grow harder, wiser, and craftier year by year; Dr. Rolvaag instead pictures a mental as well as moral deliquescence that is a little hard to accept. In the end they come to disaster, and with hands still groping for gold, perish as only the most short-sighted and feeble-witted fools perish. Is the psychology good? The case is so repulsively extreme that any psychology would be possible—and that is the principal weakness of the book.

Dr. Rolvaag, one feels, has either revived here an earlier and 'prentice work, or after "Giants in the Earth" and "Peder Victorious" has taken a little rest by trying a simple and age-old theme which can be treated in narrow limits. In either case, "Pure Gold" counts neither for nor against him. It can be disregarded. We shall look forward to other books from him, in which we shall again feel the wonderfully fresh and ebullient talent that gave us Per Hansa, Beret, the boy Peder, and all the other figures of his rich studies of Dakota pioneering.

MORTAL MEN. By Burnham Carter. A. & C. Boni. 1929. $2.50.

A romantic of the school of Scott Fitzgerald is the Carter who appears beneath a scratch in the surface of this first novel. The author, inoculated with the virus of Princeton, Wall Street, and the "Faery Queen,' has set about chronicling groping youth according to the modern mode. His types are the pseudo-sophisticated types of the Northeastern universities, garnished offsprings of the drinking classes. His theme, it follows, is sex: but a poetized sex, the sex which goes with a log fire at five in the afternoon, the sex of a Chopin nocturne.

Mr. Carter shows a substantial command of organization and an unlabored handling of ideas which, although *cliché*, are legitimate. His chief structural weakness seems to lie in the hesitancy with which he attacks his subject. The first half of the book has as little economy of material as a five-minute close-up of Greta Garbo. The irrelevant remembrances of things past and the extraneous passages of purple diminish, however, as the book progresses, and are in a large measure compensated for by the apparent sensitiveness and seriousness of the author.

THE TROUT INN MYSTERY. By Winifred Greenleaves. Dial. 1929. $2.

The more remote from everyday experience the incidents of a mystery story are, and the more commonplace and rudimentary the passions it involves, the easier it is for the average practitioner to handle. The interest of the type, at its best, is intentionally superficial; its aim, to excite wonder at the strangeness of the action, and perhaps of the characters, without probing into those depths of mature human emotion with which the serious novel is chiefly concerned. Its psychology, like the psychology of the fairy tale, is properly juvenile; at its best its element of wonder may be equally absorbing. In the "Trout Inn Mystery," on the other hand, the only strangeness is in the inner motives of the characters. This sordid domestic tragedy, enacted at a tourists' inn among the picturesque hills of Westmoreland, with its ugly triangle, its Clytemnestra-like figure of the mistress of the inn, and its gruesome detail of the idiot son shut up in the lonely cottage, offers materials from which a Tolstoy, a Hardy, or a Dreiser might fashion a tale quick with pity and terror. But seen through the eyes of an Oxford undergraduate on a holiday, surrounded with the thinnest sort of mystification, and diluted with a sugary romance, Miss Greenleavs's story fails to command either our interest or our belief.

THE SWORD FALLS. By Anthony Bertram. Harper. 1930. $2.50.

In this novel, Mr. Bertram evidently intends Albert Robinson, the central character, to be the average English commoner caught in the chaos of the war. Before 1914 Robinson was a solicitor's clerk—safe, placid, and inarticulate; in 1918 he was still inarticulate, but everything that he had held dear was in ruins. Indeed, his calamity is almost too thoroughgoing to be impressive. His son, turned coward, is shot down by his own offices; his home in suburban London is destroyed by a German bomb during an air-raid; his wife, having been touched by insanity, no sooner comes to herself than she dies, presumably from pneumonia; and his daughter, who might have been a comfort to him, goes off with her husband to Australia. Everything that he loved is destroyed. And while all this has been going on, Albert himself has been in the war and has returned to England with an almost fatal abdominal wound. After the tumult, however, he goes back to his old job, fairly cheerful in a dumb, brutish sort of way. We are led to believe that the whole catastrophe made little impression upon him. Certainly it made little on us.

The descriptions of London in wartime and of Albert in the Army training camp are often entertaining; the actual war scenes are vivid and convincing. But beyond this the novel is not successful. Albert's early years are too utterly commonplace to be significant. Arnold Bennett might have written the first half of the novel interestingly, but Mr. Bertram is too standoffish and condescending. Furthermore, during the early chapters Mr. Bertram is not sure just what he is trying to do. For instance, Robinson is, during a large part of the book, a butt for the author's ridicule, and later when we are called upon to sympathize with him, we are more than a little uneasy at Mr. Bertram's shift of attitude. In general, we are justified in saying that the novel lacks warmth and humanity. Its appeal depends almost entirely upon a certain facility in description.

THE ROMANCE OF ANTAR. By Eunice Tietjens. Coward-McCann. 1929. $2.50.

Miss Tietjens in this book has retold what is, according to her preface, the greatest of the hero-stories of pre-Mohammedan Arabia, and one which still enjoys the greatest popularity among the Arabs.

Miss Tietjens has done her best with her material, and will no doubt receive the gratitude of readers peculiarly interested in Arabia for making this folk-tale available to them; but to the general public "The Romance of Antar" will have little to offer. From a hero-tale a sophisticated reader demands either the fully developed romantic machinery and atmosphere of the Nibelungenlied or the Odyssey, or the

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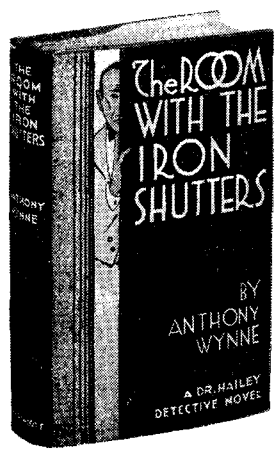

The Room with the Iron Shutters
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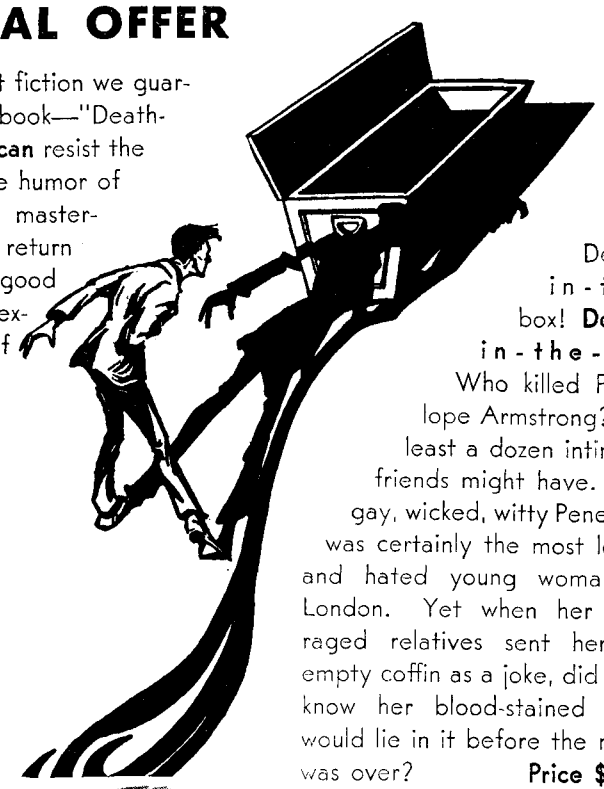

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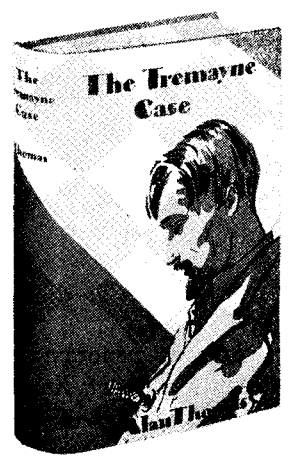

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primitive simplicity and conviction of reality of the Saga of Burnt Nial. Lacking both of these, any story of the deeds of a warrior is essentially no better than "Jack the Giant-Killer"—a fairy-tale in which each opponent must have more heads than the last to give even a semblance of variety and suspense. The story of Antar falls in this third class. There are no genii or other wonders such as delight us in the "Arabian Nights"; but neither is there any reality in a story where the hero, alone in a desert, holds twelve thousand horsemen at bay for an hour. Antar engages in a climactic series of fights with monotonous success, and that is really very nearly all.

By far the best incident in the book is the last, for in Antar's final battle there is possible an anxiety none of the others could have, and this episode employs a romantic device, the dead body of a hero used to terrify his enemies, which wherever it occurs, from the Oriental legends of King Solomon to Lord Dunsany's "The Sword of Welleran," never fails of its effect. But on the whole the story of Antar is too simple, a tale only for children and nomads.

FALSE SPRING. By BEATRICE KEAN SEYMOUR. Knopf. 1930. $2.50.

This book impresses one as that rare thing, a novel that primarily intends to tell a story. The story is an excellent one, dramatic and convincing; one foresees, yet one is anxious. But in the story lies much more than the story itself.

The characters stand out, vivid and authentic, at least the women; the men, as is almost inevitable in a novel by a woman, are less life-like. The horror, for instance, that Charles feels for any woman who would take a lover, seems to be stated as an observed fact, but not really understood, while Aunt Frances's far more venomous hatred of the same thing is reprehended but not fully comprehended. But the men after all scarcely count; they are beings whom the women love, whose love is of great importance in the story, but who have no importance in themselves; they are like the female characters in so many books by male authors. The women are the great thing in "False Spring." The book has at least one of the qualities of the hypothetical novel Virginia Woolf sketched in "A Room of One's Own," in order to show what one might expect of women writers. In it she pretends to have found the bold statement "Chloe liked Olivia"—a situation Mrs. Woolf says, quite new in literature, for "Cleopatra, you remember, did not like Octavia." Now Mrs. Seymour's Virginia likes Sylvia, though she has as much reason to dislike her as Cleopatra to dislike Octavia; and for their friendship alone "False Spring" would deserve all the interest Mrs. Woolf gives to her imaginary novel.

A philosophy also appears naturally in the course of the story, or if philosophy is too exigent a term, at least an attitude toward life, an attitude of tolerance and strength that come from surmounting real injuries. Halfway through, at the deathbed of the aunt who had deeply wronged her, Virginia learns that the wrong was more cruel than she had known, yet she forgives her aunt without an effort, feeling that resentment is too little to stand in the presence of death. By the time her children are grown she has attained the rarer conviction that resentment and regret are too little for the presence of life. Her acceptance of life as a whole is no less apparent because it is not put into words. After reading Virginia's story one feels that one has met a mature woman of great courage and wisdom.

COUSIN BERYL. By J. C. SNAITH. Appletons. 1929.

"Cousin Beryl" is not by the J. C. Snaith of those serious and moving books, "The Sailor" and "The Undefeated," nor by the melodramatic Snaith of "The Council of Seven," but by the easy, amusing Snaith of "Araminta." When he is at his best, Mr. Snaith can be delightful in this vein; "Araminta" has more than a touch of Mr. E. V. Lucas; but "Cousin Beryl" bears too many marks of having been hastily and over-easily dashed off. The characters are described again and again in the same terms, as if the author were afraid to let them make their own impression; this is perhaps because he has too great ambitions for them. Thus the heroine, the daughter of a country vicar, who makes an amazing success with her first book, both as novel and play, is credited half a dozen times over with a strong resemblance to Jane Austen, though the only incidents in her work that are referred to are "the vampin' scene where the parson's daughter has the misfortune to put her foot in the cow-pat—the first time there's been a cow-pat on any stage," and "the moment the curtain went up to disclose Lady Charlotte Shuckburgh in the act of being shaved by her confidential butler." In the same way the hero has to sustain frequent comparisons with Cyrano, with little more to sustain them with than a large nose and a taste for improper stories. There is a similar indolence or hurry in the plot. There are two main problems raised, whether Jane Austen can accept Cyrano, and how her clerical and saintly father will take his daughter's *succès de scandale*. The first is left unanswered, and the second is solved by making the vicar regard the book as "a beautiful allegory, sweetly and nobly wrought"—which on the evidence strains credulity a little too far.

Still, though "Cousin Beryl" does not make the most of its possibilities, most of what it does make is extremely amusing. The separate episodes are well done, and the characters, except perhaps Beryl herself, are presented with much gusto. Lady Cornelia in particular can take a worthy place in the gallery of formidable great ladies. It is a pity "Cousin Beryl" is not better, but for what it is it is good entertainment.

LOOT OF THE FLYING DRAGON. By KENNETH PAYSON KEMPTON. Little, Brown. 1930. $2.

Split us if this ain't a bloody fine tale, as you might say, especially after a few hours with the mariners of the brig, *Fancy*. It concerns chiefly the biddable young Barny Vane of Boston in the saltier days of 1700. Barney had the misfortune—or the fortune, depending on one's taste for adventure—to be apprenticed to the merchant Nicholas Hornigold, and a perfect name it is for the old pirate. Barny could wiggle his ears, play the fiddle, and had wit enough to suspect something when he discovered the Papal jewels in his employer's cellar. Hornigold appears at a bad moment. A bale of goods—with Barny inside—is borne upon the *Fancy*, and thus neatly are Barny and the reader launched upon a sea of troubles, of which John Rackham would not be picked as the least. But Rackham is only one of the pirates. The Sieur de Benoit, Robin Hood of the sea, founder of a piratical Free State, signs on Barny, still temporarily alive owning to his gift for music. And so it goes, from one extremity to the next, to end with Barny happily wiggling his ears. It is a fine fresh tale, cleverly accelerated without seeming to hurry.

(*Continued on next page*)

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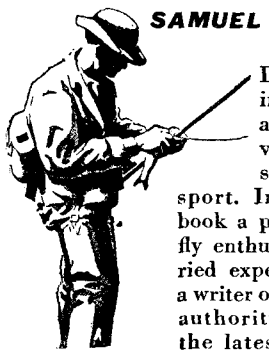

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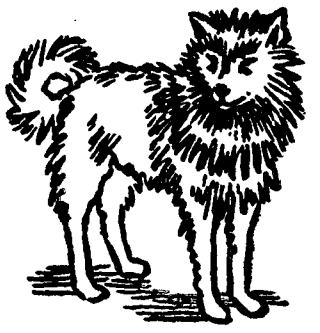

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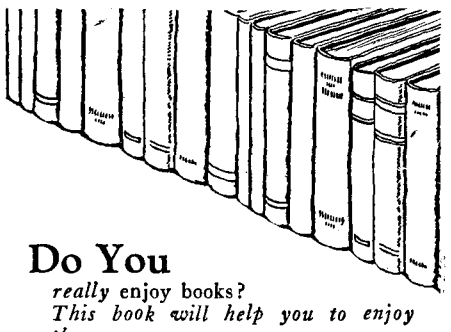

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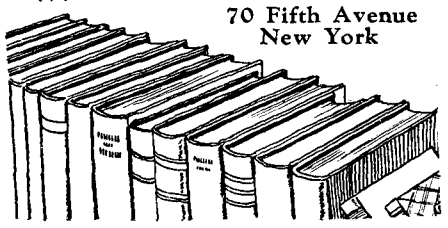

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

RAINBOW IN THE SPRAY. By PAMELEA WYNNE. Doubleday, Doran. 1929. $2.

When Elizabeth left her German Garden and began writing of charming and whimsical ladies who were denied romance at the age with which romance is usually associated, but granted it in those dull years which we prosaically call middle age, she blazed a trail that has since become an extremely well travelled thoroughfare. Since "Love" there have been hordes of gentle women never destined to see forty again who have blossomed suddenly into beauty and love between the gay covers of the seasons' lighter fiction. And, alas, not all the authors have the tempered, ironic pen of the Countess Russell which makes her books a sharp delight under the grace of their surface charm.

Pamela Wynne's latest novel has moments of approaching the pungent best of this type of story. Never was there a drabber heroine than the recently and fortunately widowed Mrs. Latimer. Perhaps a little exaggerated, but very convincingly, this Mrs. Latimer emerges from the gray husk that her husband's brutality had formed around her. Gradually the red-eyed, sallow, and browbeaten woman begins to realize that her husband's death has brought her a chance for life. She is great fun in her timid reactions to this possible life that offers itself to her, and she is very good psychology, too. The story is really a dual one with mother and daughter, both completely disillusioned with marriage, falling in love at the same time and fighting desperately to save themselves from the letter of the marriage laws. Of course both lovers finally convince their loves that their is nothing intrinsically evil in permitting the state to sanction their unions (as a matter of fact neither woman could ever have achieved a "free union" and their arguments for such are so feeble and personal that only with great coöperation on the part of the reader can this section be accepted at all), and they all are well on the way towards living happily ever after when the story closes. But they are amusing on their way to this felicity.

MY WIVES. ANONYMOUS. Harpers. 1929. $2.50.

How they pour out of the presses! "Ex-Wife," "Ex-Husband," and "My Wives." No wonder that in a recent divorce suit the playwriting husband stipulated that the alimony should continue only so long as the wife kept out of print in the matter of her marital experiences. So revelatory, not to say exhibitionistic, have these brief unions become that one expects to see on the bookstand any morning now an inviting cover bearing the title "Ex-Room-mate." Autobiographic intimacies are fairly elbowing each other off the best-selling lists.

The slightly polygamous suggestion about "My Wives" is deceiving. The wives are strictly sequential and very modest in number: only two. It is but fair to admit, however, that the jacket is honest in its inviting reference to "three women" in the life of their "discreetly anonymous" author. These women are Penny, Paulette, and Marilyn. Penny marries the storyteller because she can better her position by doing so, and when she sees the prospect of still further benefiting it by still further marrying she arranges for that, too. Penny herself leans a little towards the stereotyped, but the part of the book dealing with her story is one of the most amusing. With Marilyn an ominous atmosphere creeps in. What an abysmal sort of revenge is the bitter cold insult of her marriage. In this tragic trifle, so carefully elaborated, one wishes that the author had been content to be less amusing and really to probe the momentary perversion that he creates. With Paulette the tone changes too much and not enough. The writer has become so thoroughly the amorous buffoon that when he approaches something more he loses his reality with his personality. And Paulette, in the manner of her presentation, is too similar to her predecessors to register as sufficiently different for the more serious rôle she plays in the story.

If "My Wives" was written as lightheartedly and purely for amusement as it appears to have been at its best, then one might take it or leave it and say nothing; but if it was written with the intention of being near, but never actually, shocking, as it appears to have been at its worst, one can neither take it or leave it without resentment at its having received such really beautiful publication form.

A HIGH WIND IN JAMAICA. By *Richard Hughes.* Harpers.

MURDER AT THE NOOK. By *A. Fielding.* Knopf. $2.

TO BEGIN WITH. By *Raymond Pearl.* Knopf. $2.

MR. GOLDBERG'S PARTY. By *Vicomte Alain de Léché.* Carrier. $2.

ANNA KARENINA. By *Count Leo Tolstoy.* Modern Library. 95 cents.

THE SUN ALSO RISES. By *Ernest Hemingway.* Modern Library. 95 cents.

THE TURN OF THE SCREW. By *Henry James.* Modern Library. 95 cents.

LIGHTNIN' CALVERT. By *W. B. M. Ferguson.* McBride. $2.

AN ARMY WITHOUT BANNERS. By *John Beames.* Little, Brown. $2.50 net.

THE SHAGGY LEGION. By *Hal G. Evarts.* Little Brown. $2 net.

THE RED MESABI. By *George R. Bailey.* Houghton Mifflin. $2.

THE LIGHTED LANTERN. By *John Lebar.* Appleton. $2.

International

MAKING A NEW CHINA. By NO YONG PARK. Stratford. 1929. $2.50.

The extreme Chinese nationalist point of view is here presented by a skilled and eloquent advocate in a most readable form, enlivened with a wealth of information about China and Chinese ideas. The effort of the Young Chinese to reform the abuses of the old social order and to adopt necessary methods from the Occident is one of the most important movements of the world today. The reasons for the various nationalistic policies are admirably explained. In the introduction, Senator Shipstead states that nearly a million people in the United States and Canada have heard the author speak on the Far East.

It is to be regretted, however, that there are so many "inaccuracies." For instance, we read "During and after the (Taiping) rebellion imperialism crept in very steadily. The foreigners took over the Chinese customs administration during the rebellion." The author must know that this was done at the request of the Chinese Government owing to the breakdown of the administration. On the same page he remarks: "The powers occupy the lands for ninety-nine years or more without paying a cent of rent," and then mentions a part of the payments actually made. He writes: "China completely reformed her judicial system after the western practices." In the last few months, Great Britain and the United States, with all the facts before them, have tactfully told the Chinese Government that they cannot consent to submitting their citizens to Chinese courts until this has been done.

Often, perhaps by accident, he admits the well known facts, as when he quotes the great Chinese scholar, Dr. Hu Shih: "What is needed today, it seems to me, is a deep conviction, which should amount almost to a religious repentance, that we Chinese are backward in everything and that every other modern nation in the world is much better off than we are. For all this we have ourselves to blame. Let us no longer deceive ourselves with self-complacent talks about imperialistic powers hampering our national progress and prosperity. Let us read the recent history of Japan and bury our conceit and self-deception once for all in shame and repentance."

RENASCENT INDIA. By *K. S. Venktaramani.* Madras: Mylapore.

Miscellaneous

THE WEST VIRGINIA ENCYCLOPEDIA. Edited by PHIL CONLEY. Charleston, W. Va.: West Virginia Publishing Co. 1929. $14.50.

This is "the first general reference book of one state to be published in the United States." So says the Preface, and so far as a reviewer better acquainted with reference books than West Virginia can say, it sets an example that should be followed. In convenient alphabetical form are arranged the topics—biographical, geographical, economic, etc., etc.—to be consulted. As for example, pp. 284 ff. cover Glassock, W. E., 13th governor, Glass Industry, Glass Sand Industry, Glen Alum Coal Co., Glenville State Normal School. The volume is well bound, and well printed, and excellently illustrated. It should be in all reference libraries and in every large newspaper office.

FARMINGTON PAPERS. By JULIUS GAY. Privately Printed by D. N. Barney, Farmington, Conn. 1930.

Books like this, when well done, as this one is, should be commended, for they are not only excellent reading for those of antiquarian taste but they preserve that informal history of the past out of which formal history must be made and by which it is often corrected. The author from time to time made special studies in the history of that most decorous and most charming of Connecticut villages, Farmington, and this book is a final collection of his papers—on schools and schoolmasters, on the old canal, on old houses and Farmington in the Revolution, on libraries, Indians, and emigration, and on the social life of Farmington when the active males had gone West and there were "at least five young women to one young man."

NERVE TROUBLES. By *Cecil Webb-Johnson.* Stokes. $1.

THE NORMAL DIET. By *W. D. Sansum.* Mosby.

THE OLD TIME COLLEGE PRESIDENT. By *George P. Schmidt.* Columbia University Press. $4.

INCOMPATIBILITY IN MARRIAGE. By *Felix Adler.* Appleton. $1.50.

PERSONOLOGY. By *Frederick B. Fisher.* Abingdon. $1.50.

SCHOOL REVUE. By *Henry P. Morrison.* University of Chicago Press. $250.

THE CAUSE AND CURE OF COLDS. By *William S. Sadler, M. D.* Crowell. $2 net.

AUTHENTIC VOICE PRODUCTION. By *W. Warren Shaw.* Lippincott. $2.50.

THE BABY'S FIRST TWO YEARS. By *D. Richard M. Smith.* Houghton Mifflin. $1.75.

THE OFFICE AND TOMORROW'S BUSINESS. By *L. C. Walker.* Century. $1.50.

REBELS. By *Ramón Francisco.* Graphic Publishers.

DOG-BASKET. By *Diana Thorne.* Rudge. $10.

MY AUNT ANGIE. By *Roy L. McCardell.* Farrar & Rinehart. $2 net.

RIDING THE AIR WAVES WITH ERIC PALMER, JR. Liveright. $2.

OLD ENGLISH FURNITURE FOR THE SMALL COLLECTOR. By *J. P. Blake* and *A. E. Reviers-Hopkins.* Scribners.

TRIAL OF BROWNE AND KENNEDY. Edited by *W. Teignmouth Shore.* London: Hodge.

FROM A NEW GARDEN. By *Mrs. Francis King.* Knopf. $3.

Poetry

THE DUNCIAD VARIORUM WITH THE PROLEGOMENA OF SCRIBLERUS. By ALEXANDER POPE. Edited with an introductory essay by ROBERT KILBURN ROOT. Princeton University Press. 1930. $4.50.

The bi-centenaries of the "Dunciad" have been well marked. In 1928 the Oxford University Press brought out an exact replica of the earliest "imperfect" edition, and now (actually at the end of 1929 in order that the anniversary might thus be commemorated) an American university press follows with a facsimile of the first variorum edition, with all its amusing prolegomena and appendices. The new volume is a brilliant example of modern bookcraft; the Princeton Library's copy of the first issue has been reproduced by a photographic process, and the result is a book that ought to please both the scholar and the collector. With these two reprints every library, public and private, can have the "Dunciad" in both of its original states. There is a real pleasure in having it in its first form, before the unhappy substitution of Cibber for Theobald.

Professor Root has launched the new edition with an admirable introduction, in which he explains the conditions under which the original publication took place; he comments briefly and learnedly on the mysteries which shrouded its early appearance, and defends Pope from the charge, so frequently made against him in the nineteenth century, that his poem was an injudicious and petty attack upon men who were unworthy of his scorn. In reality the "Dunciad" is a magnificent *jeu d'esprit,* wholesome in its general criticism and expressive of the genuine Augustan contempt for pedantry and stolidity. Professor Root is right to emphasize, calmly but eloquently as he does, this important truth.

(*Continued on page* 860)

The Wit's Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 81. A First Prize of ten dollars and a Second Prize of five dollars are offered for the best specimens of what might have happened if **Mr. Ring Lardner had written "Romeo and Juliet."** (Entries, not exceeding 400 words of prose should reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, New York City, not later than the morning of March 25. Competitors are advised not to attempt to tell the whole story.)

Competition No. 82. A First Prize of ten dollars and a Second Prize of five dollars are offered for the best short rhymed lyric called "Mirage." (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of April 7.)

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*

G. S. P., New York City, asks for a book to give an eleven-year-old boy who reads but has never read a book of his own free will, having a good enough mind but no notion of using it in this way.

THIS is the time of year that—looking fearfully upon the advancing waves of Spring publications and calculating reading-speed required for keeping my head above water—I ask myself feebly, why encourage anyone who has not yet become addicted to reading, to use the mind in this pursuit? The more, as the books likely to get him going most rapidly are those that may enlarge his sphere of mischief. For what boy could resist going on with Tarkington's "Penrod" or "Penrod and Sam" (Doubleday, Doran), once he had been carried half a dozen pages into the excitement by some crafty adult who then left him to read it for himself? There was the same sort of fascination in my youth in Thomas Bailey Aldrich's "Story of a Bad Boy"—whose somewhat delusive title lured many a boy to take a chance on print on his own account. Its title does not advertise it, but "Reddy," a new story by Mary Biddle Fitler (Harper), is about just such a young rascal. Fancy a frontispiece showing a small boy expertly letting himself down from his bedroom window after dark by a rope-ladder, and a first line stating that gloom on the face of the Great High Master of the Red Lions had made his freckles come out darker than usual. Fancy a proper boy pausing after that. It is a story of boy-gangs in neighboring small towns, and there is a good, straightforward plot. No wonder it has been rapidly adopted by boys.

It may be, however, that the ten-year-olds in this book are older for their age than the boy under consideration. In that case, fall back on my standard stimulus for the non-reading young; "The Story of Dr. Dolittle" (Stokes). Hugh Lofting's amiable animal-doctor has started thousands of them and kept them going through a series of volumes; by the time they were over, reading was no longer a task.

This is a case for the exchange of actual experiences. Reports will be welcomed.

B. H. T., Chesham, N. H., looks for a well-illustrated, lucid, comprehensive, elementary physics book "that would reveal what makes the wheels of the world go round to one who has not even the beginnings of an inkling. It must be grown-uppish and not have the 'well, little dears, Uncle Robert is going to tell you the story of the dew' attitude, and it mustn't be too sky-high in price, either."

I DO like definite orders; they simplify matters so. In this case, given the data, I can just lift from a nearby shelf, where I keep it to look up things that even the most "untechnical" introductions to modern science take for granted—the "New Practical Physics" of Newton H. Black and Harvey Nathaniel Davis (Macmillan), a text-book costing $1.68, with some sort of a picture, whether drawing or photograph, on every page, questions for review and further study, problems to solve, and in general, emphasis on the application of these principles to daily life. For instance, why does one lower the handle of a lawn mower in pushing it through tall grass? Why does a spiral handle on a stove-lid protect your hand better than a solid one? How do you clean table silver by the electrolytic method? and a nice easy method it is, which you have probably used without knowing it. This is a new version of a work well-tested in teaching experience, which has been brought to the present especially in respect to aviation, radio, television, talking pictures, and recent experiments with X-rays and crystals.

You are not the only reader to resent the "story of the dew" type of scientific information. Children, even especially quite little children, are resenting it. I believe if we could find out what they really think, they would be found to prefer to take their science straight or leave it alone, and to take it in plain, easy words, without humor.

E. D., Detroit, Mich., asks for the best prose translation of the Bhavagad-Gita.

THE Bhavagad-Gita," translated from the Sanskrit with text and English prose translation on the same page, with notes, argument, and comment by W. Douglas P. Hill, was published by the Oxford University Press in 1928. It has a descriptive list of other important translations in an appendix.

Several verse translations have been made besides the one by A. W. Ryder, recently published by the University of Chicago. It was "condensed into English verse" by Romesh Dutt and issued as one of the Temple Classics (Dutton); Franklin Egerton's translation is published by the Open Court; Annie Besant's by the Theosophical Press; it is one of the volumes of the Oxford University Press's "Sacred Books of the East," translated by K. T. Telang, and as "The Lord's Lay" it is published by Houghton Mifflin in a translation by Mohini M. Chatterji with commentary, notes, and references to the Christian scriptures.

G. A. M., Baltimore, O., having a paper to write on "friendships immortalized in story, song and picture," has looked in Thomson's "Celebrated Friendship's" and Ransom's "Book of Friendship" but found neither helpful for this purpose.

SO I suppose B. J. Mathew's "Heroes in Friendship" (Oxford University Press) may not be all that is required, but it is a helpful little book. That seems to be all there is in the way of documentation, unless you can use Emerson's essay on the subject, or Cicero's oration. There are, however, a number of famous names that practically force themselves upon the mind: Hamlet and Horatio, Damon and Pythias, David and Jonathan, Orestes and Pylades, Roland and Oliver, Goethe and Schiller—resulting in any number of combination-statue-memorials — Swinburne and Watts-Dunton, "Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman" —even if that did blow up and leave Queen Anne and the Duchess of Marlborough glaring at one another—*fidus Achates*, that merchant of Venice who let himself in for losing a pound of flesh for a friend, Kim who was "the little friend of all the world," Mr. Mole and his friend the Rat in "The Wind in the Willows"—all figuring in literature and some in art as well, the last-named appearing not only in the illustrations by Nancy Barnhart for the Scribner edition of Grahame's immortal book, but on the stage in A. A. Milne's dramatic version, "Toad of Toad Hall" (Scribner). Song is not so easy; to save me I cannot think of anyone but Frankie and Johnny and I really cannot recommend them. There are the two chaps who were "comrades, comrades, ever since we were boys," but their names do not appear in the record.

V. P., West Allis, Wis., wishes to learn to read and write in Slovak, and asks what text-books to buy for the purpose.

THE New York Public Library says that most of them are rather hard to get. However, "Slovak (Slavish) Self-taught," by Stanislaus Moravek (Bratstvo Print, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.) was published in 1924, and Charlton Dixon's "Slovak Grammar for English Speaking Students" in 1904 (Amer. Slav. Gazette).

THE librarian of Glenville High School, Cleveland, O. tells the inquirer in Manhattan, Kansas, who liked Mrs. Coleman's "Bells" that he is likely to find the following book worth owning if his interests lie along these lines: "Carillon Music and Singing Towers of the Old World and the New," by W. G. Rice (Dodd, Mead, 1925). Its references to the carillon in literature are particularly fascinating.

Two weeks ago I answered a cry from a reader who had asked every undertaker and librarian in his Southern city, to no avail, for books on the technique of human cremation. All I could tell him was that the John Crerar Library of Chicago has printed a list of all the books, pamphlets etc. dealing with the subject, but so far as I could find, few of them go into details. H. G. Wells describes the cremation of his wife in "The Book of Caroline Wells," though not at length. Now I come upon the subject quite unexpectedly in the closing chapters of Allen Updegraff's excellent new novel, "Native Soil" (Day), which deals with the return of a native of a Mid-Western city after some years in Paris, and the effect of so much modernity upon a comparatively conservative middle-aged mind. The airplane chapters in it are uncommonly good, too; the cremation which takes place in Paris, is followed by the scattering of the ashes from a plane. The book, however, is generally in ironic good humor. I have mislaid my correspondent's letter, so send him the news in this manner.

E. K. W., Jacksonville, Ill., asks for suggestions or material for the making of a club program on modern Scandinavian literature.

GET "Scandinavian Literature from Brandes to Our Day," by H. G. Topsoe-Jensen (Norton), and you will have not only the suggestions but much of the material. This is the only book on this subject in English, and if every club that has asked me a question like this would outfit its members with it, the edition would be well on its way.

F. M. C., Hollywood, Calif., asks who wrote "The Green Carnation," and if it is still in print. Robert Hichens wrote it, and it is now published by the Argus Company. *T. D. L., Wilmington, O.*, writing a paper for a club, wants a book with a description of Shakespeare's country as it appears to tourists today. "Shakespeare's Stratford," by E. I. Fripp (Oxford University Press), is a little book that will do: so also will the larger "Highways and Byways in Shakespeare's Country," by W. H. Hutton (Macmillan). One chapter of E. H. Rann's "The Homeland of English Authors" (Dutton) is given to the country of Shakespeare. One section of the best introduction to England that I have found, M. V. Hughes's "America's England" (Morrow) is about the Shakespeare district; this book is coming out in March, but I was so interested I read it all the way through in galleys.

G. W. F., Provo, Utah, asks for the best biography of Keats, and a good edition of his poems with notes.

MY choice is Amy Lowell's "John Keats" (Houghton Mifflin) in two volumes, though Sidney Colvin's "John Keats, His Life and Poetry, His Friends, Critics and After-fame" (Scribner) is a grand book too. One of the permanent memories of my literary career is of receiving from Miss Lowell—after long impatient waiting while the monumental work was brought to completion—an inscribed advance copy of this book, plunging into it, pulling the covers over my head, and not coming out for one full week-end. There is a new biography, Albert Erlande's "Life of John Keats" (Cape-Smith), for which Middleton Murry, himself an authority on Keats, has furnished an introduction: it is generally praised, but I have not yet read it: incidentally, it costs $3, whereas both the others are much more expensive. The Cambridge edition of his poems published by Houghton Mifflin is complete and includes also a great many of his letters; this costs $3.50; Macmillan publishes the poems also in the Globe Poets, costing $2.50, a valuable series.

A. M. McN., Parker Canyon, Arizona, sends me the statement in the SATURDAY REVIEW'S *review of "The Days of the Cattleman" that "there are two good historical works on the cowboy, one on the rise of the livestock industry, several on the Texas cattle drive, one on ranching in the north, and two or three on the Indian wars in the range country" and asks me for the names and authors of these works.*

MR. ALLAN NEVINS, who wrote the review in question, sends me the following list, which should be kept on hand by anyone interested in this part of the world: "The Story of the Cowboy," Emerson Hough; "The Cowboy," P. A. Rollins; "The American Livestock Industry," R. A. Clemen; "Hunting Trips of a Ranchman," Theodore Roosevelt; "Historic Sketches of the Cattle Trade," J. G. McCoy; "The Trail of Drivers of Texas," J. M. Hunter; "Fifty Years on the Old Frontier," J. H. Cook; "Texan Ranch Life," Mary Jaques; "The Story of the Soldier," G. A. Forsyth; "The Soldiers of the Plains," P. E. Byrne; "The Massacres of the Mountains" and "Indian Wars of the Far West," J. P. Dunn.

THE Reader's Adviser of the Boston Public Library sends, as "more 'grape-shot' for *B. E., Akron, Ohio*," the following titles: "Ancient Ideals," by Henry Osborne Taylor; "Progress and History," "The Living Past," and "The Making of the Western Mind," by F. S. Marvin; "The Making of the Modern Mind," by John Herman Randall, Jr. To which must be added the news that Henry Holt is just publishing the first volume of what looks like exactly the book for which B. E. W. is in search: "A History of Modern Culture," by Preserved Smith, to whose "Age of the Reformation" and "Erasmus" I owe a debt of gratitude. This volume is "The Great Renewal: 1543-1687," and is a survey of the intellectual progress of Western culture as a whole.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page* 858)

APES AND PARROTS. An Anthology of Parodies. Collected by J. C. SQUIRE. Cambridge: Washburn & Thomas. 1929. $2.50.

This is easily the best collection of parodies extant. And that — when one remembers the good ones, especially Carolyn Wells's—is saying much. For one thing, Squire himself is one of the sharpest parodists alive and his sense of the critical in terms of the comical is unusually alert. For another, he has had the courage to discard a great quantity of old "material" on which the typical assemblage of burlesques is based. For another, he has—with two or three exceptions—avoided the line-for-line, rhythm-for-rhythm take-offs on particular poems (which are, as every amateur of the craft must know, the lowest form of parody), concentrating on the species which, beneath a mocking of sound, satirizes not only the sense but the spirit.

But thus far Squire has followed the trail blazed by his predecessors, making it, perhaps, a trifle brighter and broader. It is in his use of modern and comparatively new examples of the cruel art that he surpasses them. Here, for instance, are some delectable things by Quiller-Couch, known in America chiefly as compiler of "The Oxford Book of English Verse"; two gorgeous travesties—one of them the best parody of Kipling's breathless-ballad style ever written—by the Reverend Anthony C. Deane, an undeservedly neglected humorist; E. V. Knox's devastating "The Steam-Givers," which pokes merciless fun at the epic pretensions of Alfred Noyes; Frank Sidgwick's sardonic thrusts at Browning and Masefield, the parody on the latter ("The Cheerful Chilterns") containing this unforgettable stanza:

Death is so clean,
Life is so dirty.
Life at eight fifteen,
Death at eight thirty.

The collection is, naturally, not a perfect one. Some of its faults are obvious, a few of the blemishes are more obscure and insular. The American inclusions are the usual time-worn ones: Bunner, Bayard Taylor, Charles Godfrey Leland. Squire seems not to have read any American satires since those of the *Puck* age; he has evidently never heard of Christopher Ward, Donald Ogden Stewart, F. P. A., Dorothy Parker (or are her parodies of Edna St. Vincent Millay unintentional?), Edmund Wilson, Edward Paramore, among others. Some of Squire's inclusions are debatable on more general grounds. What is W. S. Gilbert's "The Bold Mounseer" doing in this galley proof? It's pretty and it is art—but is it parody? If so, of what? The same applies to Hanigan's overused threnody on this Ahkoond of Swat—the favorite "hit" of pre-Ruth days. And, since we are cavilling, why only one example from Max Beerbohm and that (the parody of Bennett) a far less subtle and incisive "tribute" than Beerbohm's "Some Damnable Errors About Christmas" by G. K. Ch*st*rt*n, or "The Mote in the Middle Distance" by H*nry J*m*s, or "Dickens" by G**rge M**re, or that priceless ridicule of Purple Patchwork out of Stephen Phillips, "Savonarola Brown."

But this *is* cavilling. The collection is ample, modern, convenient to handle. It contains much of the finest in a well-gleaned field and not a few hitherto uncatalogued specimens. It includes a parody of a Greek Tragedy by A. E. Housman. It includes seven of the best performances of E. V. Knox. It includes four of Squire's own parodies. Nothing more need be said.

Poetry

THE LATIN POEMS OF JOHN MILTON. Yale University Press. $3.

CONVENTION AND REVOLT IN POETRY. By *John Livingston Lowes*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

Travel

THE OPEN ROAD IN ENGLAND. By *John Prioleau*. Morrow. $2.50.

THE BACKWOODS OF CANADDA. By *Catharine Parr Traill*. McClelland & Stewart.

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A Shelf of Reprints

THREE DISCOURSES: Hymen's Recruiting Sergeant, The Drunkard's Looking Glass, God's Revenge Against Adultery. By MASON L. WEEMS. New York: Random House. 1929.

HERE comes old insufferable Parson Weems! Of all things! The new long skirts are bad enough—are we in for a recrudescence of the crudities of the early nineteenth century in admonitory "literature"?

The three discourses here reprinted would delight the Anti-Saloon League and the gratuitous reformers of both sexes who try to manage our affairs for us. That the crude American society of the early 1800's needed leavening is not to be doubted, but that the works of Parson Weems were ever other than banal is not to be questioned. If his "Life of Washington," by which he is best known, went into eighty-two editions (the latest in 1927), it merely proves, as a reviewer has stated, that "he never fails to satisfy his public." So much the worse for the public.

But this has nothing to do with the Harbor Press, which has made a very comely volume out of these Sunday School tracts. It is a two hundred page twelve-mo., agreeably set in Caslon type in a straightforward style, printed on toned paper. The binding is in marbled paper boards and cloth back, with gold stamping. There are three reproductions of pictures from the old editions, designed to admonish youth—and old age. But I hate to see such trash given so fine a habitation!

THE TRUE TRAVELS, ADVENTURES, AND OBSERVATIONS OF CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH. With Introduction by JOHN GOULD FLETCHER and Bibliographical Note by Lawrence C. Wroth. New York: Rimington & Hooper. 1930.

THIS is a fine edition of the narrative of Captain John Smith's adventurous life which he wrote down in his declining years. "What we have here," says Mr. Fletcher, "is a true story over which the light of an ageing and prematurely worn man's memory fitfully plays. . . . The result is something unique in English literature, something that combines in a single work the soldier's bluff frankness with the imaginative charm of Robinson Crusoe."

The printing has been very well done. If the volume seems to offend in the recent tendency toward pretentiousness, it is only because the size has been adopted to conform to the original edition of 1630. The type has been well selected, and the careful mixture of fonts suggests the older book. The presswork has been carefully done on Marlowe paper. There are several reproductions of title page, plates, etc., from the copy in the John Carter Brown Library. The binding—save for the bevel edges—is simple and fitting. Altogether a very well-made book, printed at the Georgian Press.

The introduction by Mr. Fletcher and the note by Mr. Wroth make this doubly valuable for the library shelf.

A MAD WORLD, My Masters, and other Prose Works of Nicholas Breton. Edited by URSULA KENTISH-WRIGHT. London: The Cresset Press (New York, W. V. McKee). 1929.

THE reason for the reprinting of Breton's works may be adduced from a quotation in the introduction, from the Elizabethan publisher: his works "when read in a winter's evening by a good fire, or a summer's morning, in the greene fields: may serve both to purge melancholy from the minde and grosse humours from the body. Pleasant for youth, recreative for age, profitable for all, and not hurtful to any."

The present edition, printed for the Cresset Press by Maclehose of Glasgow, is on the whole a fairly good one, but it has two typographical offenses: the type page looks as if it had been designed for an entirely different shaped book, being too short and too wide for the paper page, and the paper is printed the wrong way. As I have pointed out before, no book is first class which is not printed correctly on the paper. The type is Baskerville, a remarkably pleasant type for such books, and is properly set with leads between the lines. Composition and presswork are admirable.

There have been 335 copies printed on mould made paper (165 for the United States) at $20, and 30 on hand made paper, bound in goat skin at $50.

THE LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM PHIPS. By COTTON MATHER. With a preface by MARK VAN DOREN. New York: Covici-Friede. 1929.

IN that quaint Magnalia Christi, with all wild and wondrous things, Heaped up huge and undigested, like the chaos Ovid sings, "the doughty Puritan parson, Cotton Mather, wrote a life of Sir William Phips —"Late Captain General, and Governour in Chief of the Province of the Massachusetts-Bay." In this book two remarkable characters meet, and Mather's story, while told with the pompousness of the seventeenth century, makes a romantic and startling figure of the Maine Boy who Made Good.

The printing of the book has been done by S. A. Jacobs at the Stratford Press. The book is a comfortable book to handle, while at the same time the type is large enough to be readable. Except for the title-page and an absurd colophon, the typography is well done, and there is a good deal to be said for the flexible paper and cut edges.

WINTER. A Poem. By JAMES THOMPSON. Reprinted from the 1726 edition. Oxford University Press. 1929. $2.50.

THIS is one of the admirable typographic facsimile series of the Oxford University Press, giving the text of the 1726 edition as faithfully as a resetting in type can do it, and with the errors and misprints all left in to season the dish. The copies used are those of the B.M. and the editor, R. W. Chapman.

HAWKING OR FALCONRY. By RICHARD BLOME. London: Cresset Press (New York: W. V. McKee). 1929. $5.00.

IF any sort of sport seems far off and remote from our time and place, it must be hawking. Essentially one thinks of it as a part of the medieval scene, and especially as forming that portion of the tapestry where high placed lords and ladies gather. Here is the guide to hawking, however, set forth for whoever will read.

The present book is a small quarto, printed in a French type (Nicholas Cochin), and containing reproductions of the plates in the 1686 edition (folio). There is an introduction by E. D. Cuming, and for the benefit of the uninitiated, the glossary of terms used in falconry is happily reprinted.

THE CHRISTMAS DINNER. From "The Sketch Book" by WASHINGTON IRVING. New York: W. E. Rudge for his friends. 1929.

OF the Christmas books which have come to me, this is an outstanding example of good workmanship and appropriateness. It is a thin quarto set in a delicate type face which at first blush seems inappropriate for Christmas: but after all *is* there any really appropriate type for Christmas? And Mr. Warde has done an excellent piece of work. Gordon Ross has done some pictures quite in harmony with the typographic style and with the story, and the cover is a fitting one. Altogether a very good piece of printing, and the more welcome that it does not attempt to be "olde English."

A PLURALITY OF WORLDS. By BERNARD DE FONTERELLE. JOHN GLANVILL'S translation, with a prologue by DAVID GARNETT. London: Nonesuch Press (New York: Random House). 1929. $8.50.

HERE we have one of those fine pieces of printing which admits of analysis—yes, but which somehow or other cannot be done from an analytical report. Nevertheless, for the sake of trying to get at what the Well Printed Book is Wearing, let's dissect this one.

Item: *size and shape.* A book to fit the

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pocket—5⅛x8 inches. Bulk—about right in proportion to the size: that is, a comely book to look at and handle, neither too fat nor too lean.

Item: *cover.* Bound in limp parchment, with the sections of the book sewed on small tapes, and laced into cover. Gold stamping on back-bone and front cover. Uncut edges.

Item: *paper.* Thin, opaque, flexible, chain marks and grain running the right way, pleasant light *café-au-lait* tone, very pleasant to handle and to look at and to read from.

Item: *type.* That lovely old Janson font handed down from the XVIIth century, of a size somewhere between 14 and 16 point, properly spaced, hand set. The type page is admirably proportioned to the paper page, the only archaism being catch words.

Item: *decoration.* Color stencil (and very successfully) by T. L. Poulton, and a free use of small astronomical signs usually in groups.

Item: *credits.* Designer, Francis Meynell. Compositor, T. W. Hay. Presswork, Curwen Press.

Item: *edition.* 1600 copies (400 for the United States).

Now there is the technical story. But the real point is that Mr. Meynell has produced a delectable book to handle, a book with charm and feeling—and that is no easy thing to accomplish. R.

TO anyone who, from the first, distrusted the idea of *The Colophon*, the first number, which has just appeared, must be a bitter disappointment: it contains so much that is interesting and well-written, so much that distinguishes it from ordinary printed discussions of rare books and collecting in general that only the supercilious who cling obstinately to a passionate belief in a single author can sniff, and refer to it as "hothouse." Mr. Rollins will write of the printing and the form later—the present review will be concerned entirely with the essays themselves.

Miss Granniss, the distinguished librarian of the Grolier Club, begins the volume with a discussion of colopons so delightfully done and written with so much ease of manner that it conceals brilliantly the mechanics of her really great knowledge: it is scholarship presented by an individual who has not permitted the fact that she probably knows more about the subject than anyone else, to interfere with a realization that she is, after all, confronted with the problem of explaining, to a slightly bored public, a technical point of book-making. It makes a perfect beginning. Mr. Mencken, Mr. McFee, and Mr. Sherwood Anderson write of their first appearances in print, the first two most entertainingly—their essays are both men at their best as writers, in a mood of somewhat amused reminiscence—and Mr. Anderson, as usual, in his manner of querulous search after something he has failed so far to find. It is so exactly like him to conclude his remarks with, "It was published. Well, the thing I was after, am still after, was just as far away as it had been before." Mr. E. W. Kemble, the original illustrator of "Huckleberry Finn," Mr. Emory Holloway, whose studies of Walt Whitman are well-known, and Mr. George S. Hellman, one of the authorities on Washington Irving, have done most interesting studies in their particular fields: Mr. George H. Sargent, who does not, perhaps, stress as strongly as possible the use of commonsense in book collecting on the part of individuals as opposed to dependence upon booksellers and other makers of "high spots" in all literatures, presents his plea for a Supreme Court of Bibliography with all the authority of his position and experience. His essay will undoubtedly have the greatest popular appeal as the subject concerns everyone who has ever tried to gather together the novels of any nineteenth or twentieth century writer. Mr. Elmer Adler has done his editorial work—in itself a most thankless and exhausting labor—with immense intelligence and distinction, and he is most sincerely to be congratulated upon the really conspicuous success of his undertaking.

G. M. T.

Hugh Walpole is to bequeath his fine collection of Scott's Letters to the Scottish National Library. The letters number nearly 6,000, and were written to Scott by many of the most distinguished men and women of his time. They are bound in twenty-four volumes, and only about two per cent of them have been published. How they came to be overlooked by Scott's biographers is a mystery, but their existence does not appear to have become generally known until shortly after the war, when they were sent to a saleroom. Mr. Walpole, who has long been a collector of Scott manuscripts and first editions, was present at the sale. The bidding started at an unexpectedly low figuree, and the letters were knocked down to Mr. Walpole at very much less than their real value. They are said now to be worth £20,000.

Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward" is too dangerous a work to be circulated indiscriminately in Yugoslavia, under the dictatorship set up by King Alexander in January, 1929, according to the Berlin *Vorwärts*. Morris Hillquit, Jack London, and Upton Sinclair are other American writers whose output is held too radical for the general run of King Alexander's subjects. And Marx, Engels, Kautsky, Darwin, Haeckel, Forel, Zola, Shaw, Barbusse, and practically all modern Russian authors are in the same class. A group of censors, headed by a clerical professor and a Franciscan monk, after many days of hard work, finally made up a list of books, including those mentioned above, which might be lent only to persons having had the advantage of higher education.

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A well-regulated spring catalogue should make its appearance in midwinter, just as The Saturday Evening Post makes its appearance on Thursday

The Inner Sanctum's announcement of its first 1930 publication program is breaking all the rules by waiting for the Ides of March. . . . If catalogues come, Spring is virtually here.

Since last December your correspondents have been toiling, affectionately, painstakingly, with the plans for this catalogue, and at last twenty-five thousand copies have come off the press, because of *The Inner Sanctum's* naive and fantastic assumption that there are twenty-five thousand readers Who Care.

The first intimation of the award of the $7,500 Francis Bacon Award for the Humanizing of Knowledge . . . the first official news about the removal of *The Inner Sanctum* next May . . . news about new books on the great star-gazers from PYTHAGORAS to JEANS . . . about man's battle with gravitation in the throat-clutching adventures of the parachute-jumpers . . . about the Gold Cooks and the Immortal Bottlewashers of All Time, the Laboratory Players who have been acting out that "great tragedy of science, the slaying of a beautiful hypothesis by an ugly fact" . . . about a new faith for a new age . . . about a case-history research into the actual psychology of achievement . . . about another book by ARTHUR SCHNITZLER and a novel in verse on a daring psycho-analytical pattern . . . about a new story by the author of *Bambi*, and a new series of Ripleysque adventures in the realm of Believe It or Not! . . . bridge books, puzzle books, and a mad fandango by JOE COOK . . . books for the years and books for the week-end, all these are disclosed and developed *con amore* in the twenty-eight pages of utterly candid and indiscreet prose which constitute the Spring Catalogue [copies free on application to *The Inner Sanctum*] of

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"OFF with his head," just as Alice's Queen in Wonderland might have said. That's what one of our gentle readers would do to the *Phœnician*—decapitate the poor bird and clear his nest right out of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. No explanations, no apologies, just one swift, sure stroke, and the rest would be silence. Well, we don't care. We're only a substitute, and our days are numbered anyway. Moreover, we're likely to burn with shame when the real Phœnician discovers how we've mistreated his columns. Now, there's a thought, as our friends of the advertising profession would say. Having once been a Phœnician (which is modern for Phœnix), even if only a substitute one, would we rise from our ashes? Or would we just stay dead? If the latter we hope no newspaper editor will put headlines over our obituary like those we ran across lately in a London paper:

The Late Lady Watts
Funeral Six Months after Death

Or are we ridiculous to find that amusing? . . .

Still, when's all said and done, we value life too highly to want the Phœnix Nest obliterated while we're in occupancy. So perhaps we'd better settle down to serious business. . . .

What's still the most serious of all topics, the war—at least the war as reflected in books—is the subject of an admirable article by *H. M. Tomlinson*, in the current issue of the *Yale Review*. Mr. Tomlinson, of whose "All Our Yesterdays" we were talking with enthusiasm the other day, writes with an integrity of statement, a moral intensity, and a passion of sympathy for the youth whose manhood was sacrificed to war, that are as patent as these same qualities in the volumes which because of them he sets above other chronicles of the struggle. *Montague's* "Fiery Particles" and "Disenchantment," *Mottram's* "Spanish Farm" trilogy, *Blunden's* "Undertones of War," and "Sergeant Grischa" are among the books he singles out for eulogy. They are all books that cry out against war, works which some of the more stern and callous critics have reproved as being traitor to the doctrine that strong men make no moan when they are hurt. Mr. Tomlinson meets that argument squarely: "Barbarians," he says, "keep straight faces under torture; that is the barbaric code," and he proceeds to recite the tale of the gunner he met in one of the final battles in France, who, to advance his battery over a captured trench, filled the hollow with bodies of the fallen British, and among them that of his brother. "That gunner," he concludes, "is a sentimentalist. He wept when he told me of it, long after. Were his tears a sign of weakness?" Mr. Tomlinson is a sentimentalist, too, if you will,—if agonizing over mankind's ills the while you see them in their proper perspective makes a sentimentalist. . . .

War books still keep coming. *Mr. John Macrae*, President of E. P. Dutton & Co., informs us that about the first of April he plans to publish "Step-daughters of War," the record of her experiences by an English girl who was sent over to France with the ambulance service in the early days of the struggle. We gather from his description that the book, though not fiction, must be somewhat of the same nature as *Mary Lee's* "It's a Great War," which halved the Houghton Mifflin-*American Legion Monthly* prize of $25,000 last year. Mr. Macrea says that its author agrees with *General Sherman* that "War is Hell." So does Miss Lee, and so do we all. And then we happen upon a book like "Schweik, the Good Soldier," and we find that even hell unwittingly has its lighter moments. "Schweik," you know, is the book that was on all the bookstalls—no, it wouldn't stay on the bookstalls—of Europe last summer, and that everyone was chuckling over. It ran serially, we believe, in a Czecho-Slovakian paper while the war was in progress, and, if the authorities can be believed, laughed the Czechs into mutiny. . . .

At last the long-heralded volume on which *Clemenceau* was at work when death interrupted his labors is announced for definite publication. It is to be issued by Harcourt, Brace on April 12, and will be entitled "Grandeur and Misery of Victory." It is what might be expected of the Tiger, a grand, slashing attack on his enemies and a dauntless revealing of inside history of the war period. In his eighties Clemenceau was still an *enfant terrible*. . . .

We continue industriously culling news from the British papers to supply you with the English gossip which the Phœnician fails to send. Our latest item, however, is American, but it comes via London, and we think it may have suffered a sea-change in transit. It's to the effect that "*Bertram Smith*, a student of McKendree, established what is said to be a world's record in chewing gum by chewing forty-five sticks of gum at one time." Perhaps you are wondering what that has to do with literature? Well, we'll tell you. We'll now a tale unfold, even though thereby we give away office secrets. Our *Editor*, our revered, our august, our dignified Editor, having been temporarily deprived of cigars and cigarettes, has taken to chewing gum. If you don't believe it, visit our office, and see him chewing while in a fine frenzy of peripatetic dictating, and behold the bits of tinfoil he has scattered over our carpet. Silver threads among the gold of literature. . . .

Don't forget that on the first of April "Gallows' Orchard" is to be published. The April fools will be those who don't read *Claire Spencer's* novel. . . .

We have had further news about the donkeys which *Louis Untermeyer* has imported from Europe and is to establish on his estate in the Adirondacks. They have been christened. One, of Spanish descent, has been named donkey Hotî, and the other, whose parentage is German, is to be known as donkey Schoen. Mr. Untermeyer informed us of this at a lunch at which *Dr. Shmarya Levin*, whose "Youth in Revolt" Harcourt, Brace has just brought out, drew a most interesting parallel between *Disraeli* and *Trotsky*, and *Jonathan Daniels*, whose "Clash of Angels" is fresh from the press of Brewer & Warren, engaged in a lively conversation with *Jean Starr Untermeyer* on the impregnation of Anglo-Saxon Puritanism by Hebrew tradition. Mr. Daniels's book is a story of the creation of heaven and earth, one of the wittiest and most interesting tales of the kind we have seen. It has one scene that stands out particularly vividly in our memory—that of a sort of trial creation of the earth in which the reader beholds as though in the great distance a globe forming, and finally two tiny figures appearing upon it, only to have it vanish like a bubble—and another that is striking, in the great battle of Zion that concludes the book with a fine, surging episode. But there are plenty of other scenes that are noteworthy. . . .

We are forgetting the new magazines that are clamoring for notice. Talking of the creation puts us in mind of them, for within ten days from the date of a letter informing us of it a new literary magazine, *Earth*, was to be ready for sale. It takes editors longer than the deity to build their world. The new periodical is published by a group of young men who seek to establish a literary magazine which "will be free from mutilated English, pink-tea radicalism, and immorality." That lets us out from competition with it on the first score and puts us in on the second and third. *Earth* will contain short stories, poems, articles, and book reviews. Well, we hope youth will be served. . . .

The Poet and the Critic, a monthly magazine using prose as well as verse, is offering a prize of $25 for the best article submitted dealing with the study or writing of poetry, a prize of $50 for the best poem, $25 for the best sonnet, $15 for the best lyric, three $10 prizes, and five $5 prizes. When is a poem not a poem? When it is a sonnet or a lyric. Contestants should address their manuscripts to *Allen Frederick Pater*, 920 Avenue St. John, New York City. . . .

The Poetry Quarterly has just begun publication. It's address is identical with that of *The Poet and the Critic* and its object is "to stimulate a wider interest in poetry." Its editor tells us that "a write-up of the vaguest sort would be vastly appreciated." We are afraid we are as vague as he could desire. . . .

Ah, the bottom of the page!

Adios.

THE SUBSTITUTE PHŒNICIAN.

The AMEN CORNER

"Any book you haven't read is a new book." Bookshops should hang this sign where all may see it. For some of us are given to lapping up first readers' columns as if the only nourishing waters came from those few fountains. Fortunately our adventurable sea abounds in good books that are both new and old. Our recent delight in Mr. Wilder's *Woman of Andros* opened up to our curiosity the *Comedies of Terence*,[1] from which it sprang. (Thus Terence became newer than Wilder!) And to those who similarly admire Wilder we suggest that they read *The Girl From Andros*, preferably in the edition translated by F. Perry.[1] For this is done into Elizabethan English, a style that more than any others is akin to Terence. It is a pleasant comparison this, of *The Girl From* and *The Woman of*. . . Curious, too, that Mr. C. Leonard Woolley[2] has such a lively time in Dead Towns! Did you see what L. M. Field, in the New York *Times*, said of this famous archæologist? If you did, you have already read *Dead Towns and Living Men*,[3] but if you didn't, you're missing a real thriller with revolvers, threats, thieves, murderers, adventure and humor; and it all really happened! . . . Those of you who have not yet started *The Diary of a Country Parson*[4] had best do so. It is "second only to Pepys." And as we read the words, a hundred and thirty-four years vanish in the twinkling of an eye, and 1930 is 1796. . . . *Johnson, Boswell and Mrs. Piozzi*[5] is a suppressed passage restored, edited by R. W. Chapman, and one of the famous type-facsimile[6] printings. Mr. Chapman has also edited *Pride and Prejudice*.[7] There are many who concur with A. C. Bradley in saying that "Jane Austen would deserve immortality if she had written only the first chapter of *Pride and Prejudice*." . . . *Letters of Lord Chesterfield*[8]—"the perfect expression of his time"—is another new volume in the *World's Classics*.[9] Read them, they satisfy! . . . But better Lenten reading is to be found in Wharey's edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*,[10] which has been called "in many ways the finest achievement in critical bibliography produced within recent years," which isn't why you might want it in Lent. . . . The publishers tell us they cannot keep in stock the new editions of *The Poems of John Donne*.[11] We are delighted, for we know that many of our readers who bought this edition recommended it to their friends. (Even as you and I.) . . . But can you imagine our inordinate delight at hearing that "some sanguine possessors of signed copies of Robert Bridges's *Testament of Beauty*[12] offer them for sale for $1,000 each"? Not that we possess a signed copy, but what we did say about the unsigned limited edition is coming to pass. . . . Christopher Morley acquainted most of us with at least the name of Sir Kenelm Digby. In fact, his [K. D's] spirit held forth periodically in the recent old days in a column in the *Post*. In the very old days (viz. 1644) he would treat of the Nature of Bodies or of Mans.Soule or of the Discovery of the Immortality of Reasonable Soules. Well, we begin to think he did make some such discovery and insured his own immortality. The popularity among *Amen Corner* readers of his *Observations Upon Sir Thomas Browne's* RELIGIO MEDICI[13] is in itself sufficient evidence. And it is the cheapest[14] sample of K. D.'s writing that we know of; others go from $15.00 to over $100.00. And if you have that much to spend for a book you should treat yourself or your club library to a copy of Gordon Craig's newest achievement, *A Production*[15] (of *The Pretenders*, by Henrik Ibsen.) We will wager that here are the finest color collotype plates ever turned out by a printer, and there are thirty-eight plates, of which the majority are in color. . . . If you like court room dramas you will find *The Trial of Lady Ivie*[16] as good as the current trial plays. Everyone of note in the 17th century in London got into it somehow, and the result is equal to a modern *cause célèbre*. Well, we admit this is a hodge-podge of recommendations but this spring sunshine lightens our steps and we gambol through many things—in the Library of the Oxford University Press,[17] of course.

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The Gossip Shop

By RACHEL FIELD

NINETEEN-THIRTY promises to be a better year for poetry, at least for poetry for and about children, than 1929, which to our way of thinking hardly boasted one distinguished book of this sort with the exception of Peggy Bacon's "Ballad of Tangle Street" and the Edna St. Vincent Millay selection of her own poetry for young people. Over at the Macmillan Company they are making plans for the Sara Teasdale poems, "Stars Tonight." This promises to be one of the most beautiful and unusual juvenile books of next Fall. Miss Teasdale has chosen the poems personally, taking some from already published work and writing a number of new ones. The result is a notable group of extraordinary beauty, which should be hailed with joy in schools and homes everywhere young people are beginning to read verse. Decorations by Dorothy P. Lathrop will be an added feature of the book. Miss Lathrop, it will be remembered, made her first and many of her most beautiful pictures for the poems of Walter de la Mare. In fact we can never think of many of his verses from "Down Adown Derry" without the eerie charm of her accompanying illustrations.

We understand, too, from Marshal Best of the Viking Press that by another year there may be a new illustrated edition of Elizabeth Madox Roberts's child poems "Under the Tree." Way back in 1922 we discovered this perfectly delightful book for ourselves. From that time on we knew we must never miss anything Miss Roberts wrote,—and we never have. Just as in her "Time of Man" and her new novel of American pioneer days in Kentucky "The Great Meadow," she gives in this group of verses a sense of wonder and beauty and reality that few books of this sort ever manage to achieve. Furthermore it is authentically American in its background and feeling. We know of nothing quite like it and it is therefore a comfort to find that it may still be had in its early format whether it later appears in the greater glory of pictures or not. Here is one of the most brief verses from it.

The Ants are walking underground,
The pigeons are flying over the steeple,
And in between are the people.

Incidentally it is called "The People." We could quote many more.

February was a big month for old dolls. First there was a St. Valentine's Day exhibit in Cleveland, Ohio. This was held at the Public Library under the auspices of Miss Effie L. Power. We were lucky enough to see it. There was a fine attendane of wax, wooden, and china delegates, all at least fifty years of age. One doll, Sara Ludlum, a person of great character and charm, boasted a hundred and fifty-four years and had heard the guns of the revolution sounding in Massachusetts before she journeyed West. At least she heard them if ears were concealed under her neatly painted black hair. We did not like to investigate. Other old dolls were assembled by Marcia Dalphin at an exhibit held in the Children's Room of the Rye Library. Here again we were enchanted with the dignity, charm, and personality of these survivors of so many years of American life.

And there were plenty more at the Antiques Exposition in the Grand Central Galleries last week, besides a collection of toy banks of great ingenuity. There was a wide range of subjects,—one depicted William Tell shooting a penny at the apple on his son's head, another represented a Tammany Leader popping a penny in his waistcoat pocket, and our favorite which was Jonah and the Whale. The penny was placed in Jonah's hand and then shot into the whale's yawning red jaws which opened realistically to receive their prize.

Speaking of prizes, though of a rather different sort:—$500 is being offered by the Junior Leagues of New England and Montreal, together with The Bookshop for Boys and Girls of the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston, for a distinguished play for children (not by children). The competition will close January 1st, 1931, and the prize winning play will have a production by the Junior League Players of Boston in the Spring of 1931. For further particulars about entries see the last page of the February Hornbook, or write direct to the Bookshop for Boys and Girls, 270 Boyleston Street, Boston.

From this same address may also be procured for the sum of twenty-five cents a most interesting and valuable booklist compiled by Elinor Whitney of the Bookshop Staff. This is to be used in the commemoration celebration of the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. This book list has taken its format and its name, "The New England Courant," from the famous old newspaper printed in Boston in 1721 with which Benjamin Franklin was associated. There are quaint old cuts of ships and scenes adapated from those actually used in the past and Miss Whitney's list of books, from verse to specialized subjects, and also juveniles, written out of this New England background, is a genuine contribution to the spirit and history of this part of the country.

And so,—it's March again, Emily Dickinson's favorite month, inspite of winds and mud and the income tax. To be sure Amherst in the eighteen-sixties wasn't so much bothered with the last mentioned evil as with the two first. Well, at any rate, we are going to get her poems right down and reread the one beginning "We like March, his shoes are purple." We would quote more if it were allowed.

THE EARTH FOR SAM. By W. MAXWELL REID. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1930. $3.50.

Reviewed by R. S. LULL

Director, Peabody Museum of Natural History

MR. REED has done an admirable thing in this book. It purports to be written for a representative American youth from ten to sixteen years of age, but it is so well and interestingly presented as to attract an adult as readily as it would a child. Mr. Reed, a former Professor of Astronomy at Harvard, possesses in full the background necessary for his task, that of showing the evolution of organic life from its cellular condition to man. It is more than a "thrilling story of scientific guesswork," as the publisher's notice puts it, since it is based upon the best interpretation of observed facts, the result of years of research of the biologist, geologist, and paleontologist. It is singularly free from factual error, although a few errors were detected in that portion with which the reviewer is most familiar, and it is natural to suppose that discrepancies also occur in the matter less familiar to him. These, however, do not invalidate the essential soundness of the volume and would lead no one very far astray.

The presentation is lively, with humor enough both in text and illustration to stimulate a story which at times might otherwise be somewhat dreary to youth. The restorations are reproductions of the best that have been produced under the supervision of experts but suffer at times in their printing and thus lack clarity of detail. The reading of the book will give great enjoyment and much instruction and may serve to encourage further excursion into the realm of past nature and thus attract more workers unto the abundant harvest of revealed science.

Certainly Sam is to be congratulated that this story was written for him, and its presentation to a wide circle of readers both in youth and maturity is devoutly to be hoped for.

Plans for the organization of the Children's Players, a group of professional actors who will appear in children's plays under the direction of Mrs. Eric Seabrooke Pinker, who is known on the stage as Adrienne Morrison, were discussed recently. According to Mr. Pinker, six plays are planned for production beginning in October.

Each presentation will be played for a month and at the conclusion will be sent on tour to theatres within a thirty miles' radius of Broadway. To date the members engaged for the acting company include Cecil Clovelly and Lois Shore. The setting and costumes for the Children's Players will be designed by Kyra Markham and David Gaither.

IT IS NOT MERE CHANCE

When a magazine more than doubles its circulation in a few years, it is not a matter of luck. It simply proves that modern minded readers have come to depend upon *Harpers Magazine* because of its dauntless honesty, its lively variety, and the unfailing importance of its contributors and the subjects they write about.

Features in the April number are:

Two Unpopular Laws of Nature

We try to ignore the law that returns increase up to a certain point, and then decrease; also the law that when too many people strive after the same good, that good disappears. In "Diminishing Returns in Modern Life," James Truslow Adams shows the inexorable working of both laws in our social and political life.

Are the French Immoral?

Mary Borden, wise and witty woman of the world, explains in her "Defense of French Morals" a code that is based on common sense, that protects the community, that recognizes only one unit—the family, that is rigorously observed, and that actually works.

"Booze in Business"

Big Business, according to the Drys, is back of Prohibition solidly. Jesse Rainsford Sprague explains that many firms do not allow these principles to blind them to the obvious advantages of the use of Scotch and gin in making sales.

"The Mad Hatter's Dirty Tea Cup"

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By Norah Hoult

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The author of JILL and FIRST LOVE tells in this new novel a story deeper and more moving than ever before. "This book is immensely readable."—*Gerald Gould* in the London *Daily News.*

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